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THE TIMES 50P

No. 65,802

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 1 1997

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Ginny Dougary on the female *mid-life crisis*
weekend

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Bid by ITV and Sky to run new service

30-channel TV goes on air by next year

By Alexandra Frean and Eric Reguly

THREE of Britain's biggest commercial television companies and the BBC yesterday created a powerful alliance to launch a £300 million bid to run digital television that could see a total of 30 channels within 18 months.

The introduction of the new technology will bring an explosion of choice for British viewers, introducing multichannel television to the three quarters of British households which do not subscribe to cable or satellite television.

Viewers will not need either a satellite dish or a cable connection to receive the new digital terrestrial channels. The technology works by compressing television signals allowing scores of channels to occupy the wavelength currently taken up by the four main channels. But viewers will need to spend around £200 on a set-top decoder box or buy a new television set incorporating a decoder. Some BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and Channel 5 programming will be offered free but the other services could cost between £10 and £30 a month.

Carlton and Granada said that they and BSkyB were forming British Digital Broadcasting (BDB). The consortium is offering 15 new paid-for digital terrestrial channels, including Sky Sports and two of Sky Television's movie channels.

It has also signed a deal with BBC Worldwide, to carry four BBC branded channels, including a new pop music station. There will also be new entertainment, education and lifestyle channels.

Michael Green, chairman of Carlton and BDB, said: "By plugging into one simple set-top box, viewers will be able to see all the existing terrestrial channels, new free channels, the latest movies, the best sport, the highest-quality drama as well as dedicated channels covering entertainment, food, lifestyle, music, shopping and news.

"Going digital is the most important development for British television since the introduction of colour."

Mr Green added that the company expected to be profitable within five years.

A rival bid was yesterday submitted to the Independent Television Commission by the Digital Television Network (DTN), owned by the cable company CableTel, which is offering up to 13 new entertainment, lifestyle, film, cartoon and documentary channels as well as an innovative text service.

In addition to the new paid-for channels to be run by either BDB or DTN, the BBC, ITV, Channel 4 and Channel 5 and the Welsh channel S4C will also be running digital channels.

The BBC is to use its digital channels to launch a new 24-hour television news service to rival Sky News and the American channel CNN. This will be available free. The Corporation will also use digital technology to transmit BBC1 and BBC2 in a new cinema-style widescreen format, which offers higher quality picutres. It will have some spare capacity to offer education programmes.ITV and and Channel 4 are planning new entertainment, film and education channels.

Although Carlton, Granada and BSkyB already have a dominant position in the market, the government is not expected to block the bid on competition grounds. Virginia Bottomley the heritage secretary is keen to get digital television off the ground as quickly as possible.

She said: "These bids offer viewers the prospect of enhanced quality and range of new programmes to complement the free-to-air programming already announced by the BBC.

"The government took the position during the passage of the Broadcasting Act that it was providing a framework to allow DTT to be delivered by the market. Today's news shows that the industry has embraced that vision."

City analysts yesterday tipped the BDB bid to win.

Digital revolution, page 7
Tempus, page 30

Lost Ben Jonson playlet is found

A lost playlet of 1609 by the English dramatist Ben Jonson, commissioned to celebrate and advertise the opening of a shopping arcade along the Strand in central London, has been discovered in the Public Record Office. It had lain unnoticed among state papers donated 130 years ago.

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OJ jury ordered to start all over again

From Giles Whittell in Los Angeles

THE O.J. Simpson civil trial judge dismissed the only black member of the jury yesterday and ordered them to begin their deliberations from scratch as jury-tampering allegations were examined.

Judge Hiroshi Fujisaki gave no explanation for the juror's removal after three days of deliberations except to say that it was for "legal cause".

A source involved in the trial said that the dismissed juror, a woman in her 60s, was removed at the request of Mr Simpson's lawyers. She was replaced with an Asian-American man in his 30s.

Judge Fujisaki had met the dismissed woman and one of her colleagues on the jury after hearing that a literary agent had sent them a letter written by two members of the jury from Mr Simpson's criminal trial. Brenda Moran, one of the criminal trial jurors, has admitted signing the letter, but she said yesterday that it was an innocent offer of support containing no mention of money or advice how to vote in the civil case.

Judge Fujisaki made clear yesterday that he regarded any contact with his jurors as tantamount to tampering. Mr Simpson, who was acquitted in October 1995 of murdering his former wife and her friend, is fighting a wrongful-death civil action brought by the victims' families.

DANIEL DAL ZANNARO/REUTERS

Signora Martinelli waits in a police car after being arrested at her Milan flat yesterday

Gucci's ex-wife charged with plotting his murder

From Richard Owen in Rome

THE blood-stained saga of feuds within the Gucci fashion dynasty took a twist that astonished even Italians yesterday when the former wife of Maurizio Gucci, the last family member to hold shares in the company, was charged with ordering his murder two years ago with the help of her "psychic adviser".

Patrizia Reggiani Martinelli, a vivacious dark-haired woman of 49, was arrested at her flat in Milan after a 22-month investigation by Carlo Nocerino, the chief Milan prosecutor. She was charged with four other people, including her clairvoyant, 51-year-old Giuseppina Auriemma, from Naples, who was accused of helping to organise the crime; a hotel doorman, Ivano Savioni, whose alleged role was not made clear; and two alleged hitmen.

Maurizio Gucci, heir to the fashion empire founded as a humble saddle-and-leather business in Florence by his grandfather, Guccio Gucci, was shot four times at point blank range with a .32 calibre pistol outside the Gucci offices in Milan on the morning of March 27, 1995. Ottavio Aragona, the deputy chief of police in Milan, said the killing had been carried out by two professional hitmen, named as Orazio Cicala, 58 — who is already in jail on unrelated drugs charges — and Benedetto Ceraulo, 35. The deputy police chief said Signora Martinelli had paid the gunmen $310,000 (£193,750) to carry out the murder of her ex-husband, with whom she had been involved in a bitter divorce settlement.

The Gucci label, carried (and counterfeited) on some of the world's most prized shoes, handbags, and other designer goods, became a byword for the yuppie boom of the 1980s. But behind the famous name lies a trail of family feuding, often violent and always acrimonious. The firm was ran for many years by Paolo Gucci, another grandson of the founder, until he was ousted after a series of hysterical

Continued on page 2, col 5

Police arrest Benedetto Ceraulo, who faces a murder charge

Major seeks to extend ownership of shares

By Jill Sherman, Chief Political Correspondent

JOHN MAJOR yesterday unveiled a range of proposals to give people a bigger stake in Britain's prosperity through a massive expansion of share ownership and greater use of personal pensions.

The Prime Minister used his second presidential-style press conference this year to announce plans to get people to rely less on state provision; to help small businesses and the self-employed, and to cut red tape. He also revealed a new scheme — Sharematch — to encourage businesses to offer free shares to more of their workforce.

He said the proposals would cost nothing, although Labour priced them at between £600 million and £1.5 billion.

As general election fever escalated at Westminster, party sources also disclosed that the Wirral South by-election would be on February 27.

Mr Major, in a confident and relaxed mood, dismissed *The Times* Mori poll showing that Labour had a 25 per cent lead as "rubbish". He said the Tories' own private polls had shown a different story.

He teased reporters over the general election by claiming he had never said May 1 was his preferred date. He said he knew when he would call the election but no-one else did.

In an attempt to regain the initiative after confused reports from Monday's political cabinet, Mr Major said his manifesto programme would include many "eye-catching" innovations. "It will be radical in improving people's lives, but offer stability to the nation." He said a number of announcements would be made in the run-up to the election and during the campaign. "Our aim is for everyone to have a people's share in our enterprise economy."

By the turn of the century, he hoped that half of all employees would own shares or options in their companies. "Already around 2 million people own a share in the company they work for through employee share schemes. My aim is a massive expansion in those numbers."

The most eye-catching proposal announced is the Sharematch initiative to boost share ownership. Mr Major said the Government planned to relax Inland Revenue rules which now restrict share offers by companies. Treasury sources said many companies wished to offer fewer free shares in return for greater investment. At the moment, companies have to offer one free share for each share paid for. "Some would like to offer one share for every five or eight invested," said the official.

In future, companies will be able to offer shares to more of their employees in return for greater investment.

"Many companies would like to give employees free shares when the employee invests money of his or her own," said Mr Major. "I intend to change the rules to help more companies to top up their employees' investment in shares with free shares from the company."

Share reforms, page 2

Lords' vote backs EU withdrawal

By Alice Thomson and James Landale

PEERS last night supported a Bill which would withdraw Britain from the European Union. The House of Lords voted by 52 to 51 to give a second reading to the Bill aimed at restoring the sovereignty of the British Parliament over European law.

More than 25 peers, including Lord Tebbit, the former Tory Party Chairman, spoke in favour of the European Communities (Amendment) Bill, introduced by the Tory Eurosceptic, Lord Pearson of Rannoch. Baroness Thatcher, the former Prime Minister, gave her tacit support by attending and nodding vigorously during Eurosceptic speeches, but did not speak.

The Bill would repeal sections two and three of the 1972 European Communities Act under which EU law was made superior to British legislation. It has no chance of becoming law.

Lord Pearson said it was probably the first time that a parliament in Europe had voted for withdrawal.

Lord Tebbit said the history of the EU was analogous to rugby. "Year by year, we who defend national sovereignty are being pushed back. It's time that the ball was kicked very long and very hard back the other way, preferably back into touch for a while."

Debate, page 11

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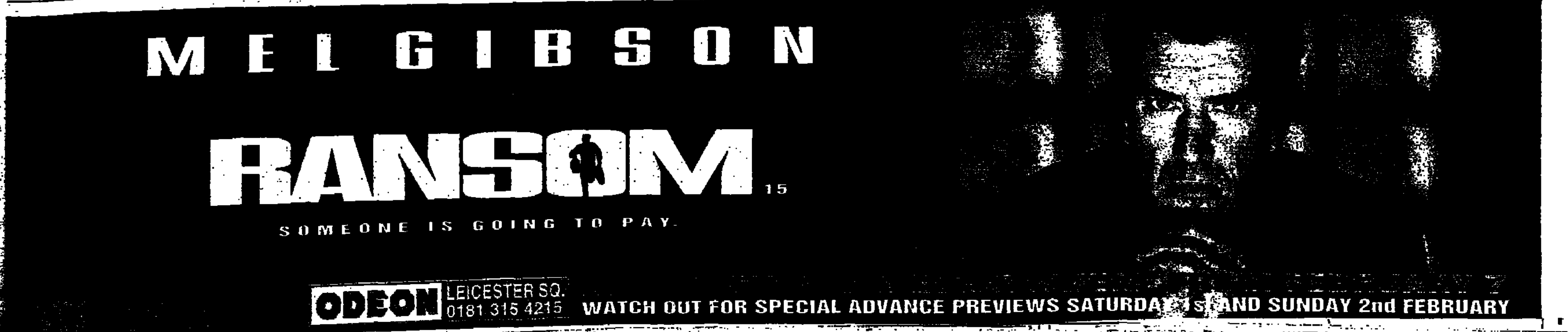

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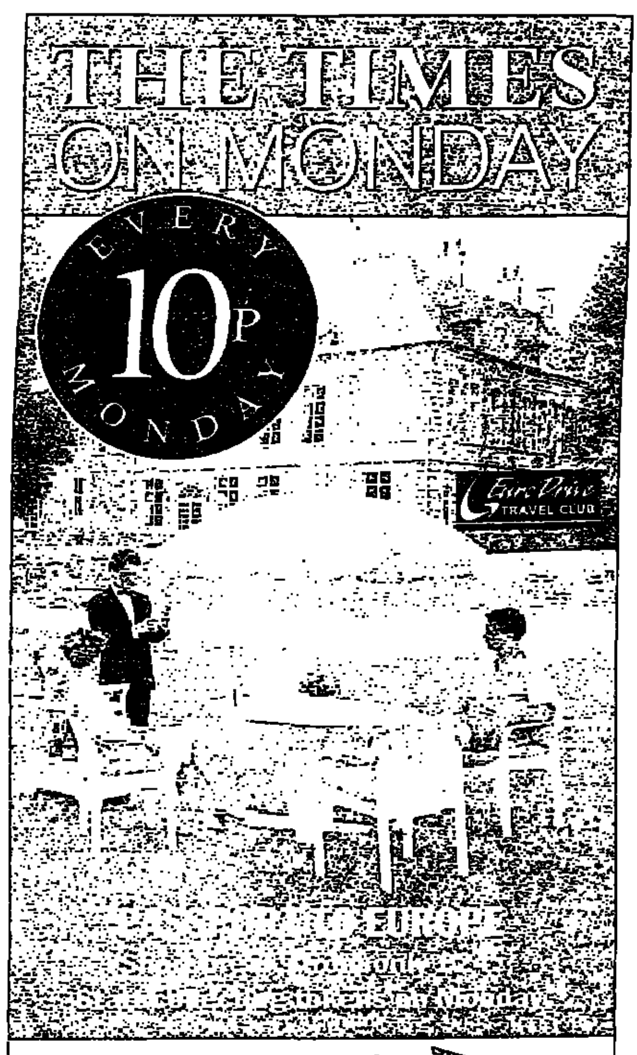

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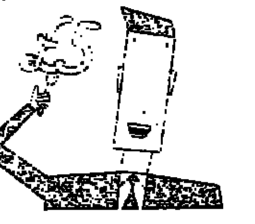

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NEWCASTLE v LEICESTER
Will the Dalglish magic work?

BATTLE OF THE FIVE NATIONS
Reports on
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BALLOT 97

Brown rules out blank cheque for public sector pay

By Jill Sherman, chief political correspondent

GORDON BROWN, the Shadow Chancellor, said yesterday that there would be no blank cheques, after disclosures that pay review bodies covering 1.3 million public sector workers had recommended above-inflation increases of between 3.2 and 3.4 per cent for next year.

Unions were furious at reports that the Government was prepared to phase in the awards and said that they would expect a Conservative or Labour government to pay the awards in full.

Geoff Martin, London convenor of the public sector workers' union Unison, said that union members might cause trouble in the first weeks of a Labour government. "It must be implemented. It is a challenge to an incoming Labour government," he said. "I think there will be a lot of anger if it isn't. I don't think our members will let us keep quiet."

Leftwing MPs also put pressure on Mr Brown to honour the recommendations. Jeremy Corbyn, Labour MP for Islington North, said: "Labour must recognise that if there is to be any justice in our society then the worst-off public sector employees deserve substantial pay rises."

However, in a series of interviews yesterday Mr Brown refused to rule out phasing in the awards and made clear that he would not implement the recommendations if they exceeded current departmental spending targets. He also insisted that he would not bow to union demands on pay. Although Labour has criticised the Tories for phasing in such awards, Mr Brown made clear he would do the same if necessary.

Brown: refused to rule out phasing pay awards

"We have got to look at the position at the time. There may be circumstances in which you don't need to stage and there may be circumstances where you have to," he told BBC radio 4.

The Cabinet will discuss the recommendations, which are well above the Government's pay ceiling, next Thursday but it is expected to decide to phase in the awards over nine months to lower the cost. Last year, a 4 per cent overall pay rise was effectively reduced to 3.3 per cent after the awards were staged, in April and December, and Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, has made clear that he will pursue an equally vigorous line this year. However, health authority chiefs said yesterday that the health service will not be able to afford the awards unless they are met by the Government in full.

Mr Brown refused to comment on the detailed pay review body recommendations until he had seen the official figures. He said he was aware that pay levels had to be set to be able to recruit and retain staff, but that this should be done within tough cash limits.

"Labour will take a firm and fair approach to public sector pay," he told a business conference in London yesterday. "Decisions will be made with a view to retain, recruit and motivate staff. But these must be made within tough cash limits. With Labour, all public sector pay agreements must be financed from within the agreed departmental cash limits upon which departments must now plan."

It is understood the pay review bodies have recommended an average 3.3 per cent award for nurses and the armed forces, about 3.25 per cent for teachers and about 3.4 per cent for doctors. It is also understood that the nurses review body has decided to revert to a one-off across the board rise rather than top-ups being negotiated locally.

Doug McAvoy, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers said teachers were at risk of being used as human pawns on the general election chess board. "I would expect Labour to honour these recommendations in full." Rodney Bickerstaffe, Unison general secretary, said that whichever government was in power, they should honour the recommendations of the review body.

Earnings escalate despite crackdown by Chancellor

By Philip Bassett, industrial editor

PUBLIC sector pay levels are still ahead of pay in the private sector, despite five years of curbs on public sector employees.

According to the Government's latest earnings survey, the five million workers in the public sector earn an average £355.60 a week while private sector earnings are £351.60. Employees in both sectors saw an average pay increase of just over 4 per cent in 1996.

Employees covered by the public sector pay review bodies — standing committees which set pay rates each year — number about 1.3 million. They include 230,000 service personnel, 130,000 doctors and dentists, 480,000 nurses and medical professionals, 470,000 teachers and 2,000 top civil servants, judges and service chiefs.

After the review bodies have reported to the Prime Minister, the Government decides how to implement their recommendations — whether to pay them in full, or stage them to cut the cost.

In 1993, most review body groups received rises of 1.5 per cent, and about 3 per cent the following year. In 1995 the increases were again about 3 per cent, while last year the range was higher, with nurses getting 2 per cent plus extra money locally, doctors 3.8 to 6.8 per cent, and teachers and the Armed Forces 3.8 per cent.

The Government decided not to stage the awards in the last two election years. But the cost of not doing so before the 1992 election proved to be so high that the Government announced the first year of the current series of pay policies, with a 1.5 per cent pay limit.

This has been followed by successive paybill freezes. These have not meant nil increases, but instead have seen rises funded from improved efficiency and performance. These have allowed some public sector groups to secure big rises, pushing up overall figures.

SIMON WALKER

John Major announcing his plans yesterday

Share reforms would be part of salary deals

By Gavin Lumsden

THE Conservatives' plans for extended share ownership and greater access to personal pension plans are intended to become part of an employee's normal employment package.

Launching the "Sharematch" initiative, the Prime Minister said that he would relax Inland Revenue rules to enable companies to top up their employees' investment in shares with free shares. Sources at the Treasury said this could encompass 4.5 million people and would counteract the phased withdrawal of profit-related pay, which 3.7 million people receive.

The existing "buy one and get one free" rule limits companies to matching the number of shares bought by employees in profit-sharing schemes. In future, companies would be allowed to offer free shares for every three or five held by employees.

The Government is also interested in expanding savings-related (SAYE) share option schemes by giving companies more flexibility in the conditions they impose before letting employees join. There are currently 1,500 SAYE schemes, enabling employees to save between £5 and £250 a month in order to buy discounted shares in the company at a future date.

John Major also promised reforms to allow people to continue contributing to personal pensions when they joined a company scheme. This would enable them to benefit from employer's contributions. Group personal pensions would be made easier to administer to encourage more firms to offer them.

Harriet Harman, the Shadow Secretary of State for Social Security, said: "Tory reform of pensions has meant that millions of people have lost out and millions more do not have adequate arrangements."

Leading figures in the pensions industry said they wanted to see radical changes, such as scrapping the 17.5 per cent earnings cap on contributions.

Weekend Money, pages 31-41

NEWS IN BRIEF

Challenge on Adams banning dismissed

An attempt by Gerry Adams and Tony Benn to challenge the Government in the European Court of Human Rights was dismissed yesterday as "manifestly ill-founded".

The European Commission of Human Rights, which vets applications to the Strasbourg court, said the complaint by the Sinn Fein president and the former Labour Cabinet minister about Mr Adams's exclusion from Britain under the Prevention of Terrorism Act was "inadmissible". In September 1993 Mr Benn had invited Mr Adams to address MPs and journalists at the House of Commons. The Home Secretary signed an exclusion order under the Act, banning Mr Adams from entering Britain.

Suspect held

Victor Farrant, 46, was remanded in custody until Monday by Portsmouth magistrates after being extradited from France, charged with the murder and attempted murder of two women. Mr Farrant, who was detained in Nice in July, flew into Britain with four detectives.

Forsyth ruling

Three Court of Appeal judges reserved their ruling over the conviction of Elizabeth Forsyth, former aide to disgraced Polly Peck chief Asil Nadir. Renewing her bail granted on Thursday, Lord Justice Beldam said that whatever the judges' ruling, Miss Forsyth would not return to jail.

Irish BSE alert

Eleven new cases of BSE have been confirmed among cattle in the Irish Republic during January. All of the herds, as well as animals in contact with the cattle involved, will be destroyed. There were 74 incidents during the whole of last year, compared with 16 in 1995.

Gunmaker jailed

Denis Lindop, an engineer who made sub-machine guns in a factory hidden behind his garage in Holywood, Co Down, was jailed yesterday for 10 years by Belfast Crown Court after admitting unlawful possession of 68 guns and a large quantity of ammunition, and manufacturing guns.

Operations ban

All routine operations at five hospitals run by Brighton Health Care NHS Trust have been cancelled until the end of March because of an upsurge in emergency admissions. It is expected that by then at least 500 patients will have been waiting more than a year for treatment.

Royal funeral

The Duke of Edinburgh and the Prince of Wales were at the funeral in Darmstadt yesterday of the Princess of Hesse and the Rhine. Born the Hon Margaret Geddes in Dublin in 1913, the Princess died at her German home, the last survivor of the house of Hesse-Darmstadt.

PoW hopes fade

Jeremy Hanley, a Foreign Office Minister, ruled out further help for 10,000 former prisoners of the Japanese in the last war yesterday. He told Denis MacShane, a Labour MP, that the Government would not help them pursue a claim for additional compensation.

Saunders refusal

A ruling by the European Court of Human Rights, that the use of Trade Department evidence in the trial of the former Guinness chief Ernest Saunders was unfair, did not provide grounds for the case to be sent back to the Appeal Court, said Baroness Blatch, the Home Office Minister.

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Blair plans secret talks with activists to woo green vote

By Nick Nuttall, environment correspondent

TONY BLAIR is to have secret talks with leaders of environmental groups as part of a new Labour strategy amid fears that the party is losing out in a key election area.

The plans, including a big speech by the Labour leader on the environment, follow concern that the party is underplaying the importance of the environmentalist vote especially among young people, first-time voters and women in Tory marginals, after an analysis of polls.

The party's National Executive Committee discussed the matter this week, with both Mr Blair and Gordon Brown speaking about the importance of getting a more effective green message over to the voters.

Last week Charles Secrett, head of Friends of the Earth, criticised the Labour Party, and echoed the fears of many leading environmentalists that a Labour government might be less green than the current Conservative one. Mr Secrett said that voters were in danger of putting in office a party of "political lightweights and cowards" on green issues.

He said that environmentalist groups were espeically worried about some of the Shadow Chancellor's tax plans. Mr Brown has said he that wants to reduce the rate of VAT on fuel, which many green campaigners believe sends the wrong signal to the public about saving energy and cutting greenhouse gas emissions.

Heads of environmental groups believe the party's document on the environment, *In Trust for Tomorrow*, is a visionary document. But they fear that it might may never be translated into hard policies by a Labour government especially in areas of tax reforms.

Mr Blair has responded by ordering Peter Mandelson, Labour's campaigns director, to increase the prominence of party pronouncements on the environment and give more support to Michael Meacher, Labour's spokesman, senior party sources said yesterday.

The Labour leader has told his front bench team that the environment must be a central issue.

Labour politicians have also been told to try to make more references to green issues in their speeches about green issues.

Leading article, page 23

Gucci ex-wife on murder plot charge

Maurizio Gucci: often skated close to illegality

Continued from page 1

boardroom rows by his cousin Maurizio, who held a 50 per cent share inherited from his father.

Maurizio often skated close to illegality as he ran the company into debt, and at one stage was successfully sued by relatives for forging his father's signature. The conviction was quashed, and he resumed the chairmanship. In 1993 he sold his holdings for a reported £1 million to a Bahrain-based company which had already bought out other relatives. Two years later Maurizio was shot in the street, just as he was trying to salvage his finances by investing in a casino in Switzerland.

The arrest of Signora Martinelli yesterday dominated Italian TV news, which showed poignant shots of her weeping at Maurizio's funeral. Milan police declined to speculate on why she might have ordered the killing, but said that there had been bitter disagreements over his alimony payments, and over their two children. There were also reports that she was jealous of her husband's mistress.

The prevalent theory at the time of his death was that his murder was linked to his huge debts (despite selling his Gucci stake) and his investment in the casino in Switzerland. Other theories focused on his failure to repay an Italian-American syndicate with Mafia links, and his debts to Delfo Zorzi, a businessman suspected of involvement in the 1993 Mafia bombing of a Milan bank. But Maurizio appears also to have been involved with several "clairvoyants" some of whom appear to have tried to blackmail him.

Since the murder, the new Bahrain-based owners of Gucci, Investcorp, have restored the company's fortunes under its new chairman, Domenico De Sole, former managing director of Gucci America.

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The bus-shelter advert: fans are now stealing them

By Carol Midgley

IT IS being hailed as one of the most meteoric rises in modelling history. A young woman from Swindon, who until this week appeared on bus-shelter poster adverts for double-glazing, is today preparing to fly to Los Angeles to be photographed alongside Hollywood's most famous swimsuit queen, Pamela Anderson.

Melinda Messenger, 22, has become an overnight tabloid sensation after being photographed semi-naked in two titles — *The Sun* and the *Daily Star*. Both have fought an unprecedented battle to claim her as their own, proclaiming her the new Samantha Fox and a national heroine.

Miss Messenger, who has not given up her full-time job as a customer services accounts manager for a marketing firm in Swindon, had modelled only the once, smiling from behind a glass pane in bra and pants, advertising Glevum Windows in Gloucester.

But when local newspapers, including the *Hereford Journal* and the *Swindon Evening Advertiser*, refused to carry the bus-stop advert on the grounds it was too explicit, Richard Goad, marketing manager at Glevum Windows, saw the chance for free publicity. With one phone call to the *Daily Star*, Melinda Messenger's fame was secured.

"Page 3 girl for the *Thrillenium*," trilled The *Sun*. "Ohh aah ... Melindaah", trumpeted the *Daily Star*. Within 24 hours, her name was on the lips of a million brickies and long distance lorry drivers, and newspapers were asking for her political views. (She will vote Labour).

The posters adverts were torn from bus shelters in Gloucester by devoted fans. Last night, it appeared that *The Sun* had won the battle to sign her up. Executives were feverishly trying to set up a photoshoot in Los Angeles with Ms Anderson, the former *Baywatch* star

Anderson: "fantastic but not a role model"

Yvonne Paul, the modelling agent who represented such successes as Samantha Fox and Kathy Lloyd, said the potential earning power of the new 34DD star was now into the millions. "We have handled a lot of girls like Kathy Lloyd, who reached the top earning capacity. I would like to think Melinda can do the same.

"She has got an eternal look, like Brigitte Bardot. But I don't want her to be thought of as the new Sam Fox or the new Pamela Anderson. She is Melinda Messenger."

Miss Messenger has 11 GCSEs but says they are irrelevant. She thinks Ms Anderson is "fantastic but not a role model". On her new status, she said: "It's a fantastic opportunity, a once in a lifetime chance. I just happened to be in the right place at the right time, which was Swindon for once.

"Being a Page 3 girl was never an aspiration of mine, but I'd look at the girls and think all the old cliches about it being a great lifestyle with all that travel and money. It's meant to brighten up people's days and give a lift to the working man, or whoever else wants to look at it."

Asked about the General Election, she added: "I hope Labour gets in. I have always voted Labour, though I suppose I used to do it in a more idealistic way. Now it's a matter of becoming a realist, because it looks as though there really is a change in political colours on the horizon."

The Sun took its new trophy to the premiere party for John Cleese's new film *Fierce Creatures*, where she was pictured with Mr Cleese, Michael Palin and Angus Deayton.

Miss Messenger lives at home in Swindon with her mother Avis, who was divorced from her father when she was five. Her father Terry, 48, a retired WH Smith executive, clearly had no fears about his daughter's new career move. To prove it, he too stripped off for yesterday's *Daily Star*, alongside his son Jamie, a paragliding instructor.

Mr Messenger said: "I am *absolutely thrilled for her*, very proud. I could cry with joy, to be honest. She is a wonderful looking girl and she has a lovely personailty. We are taping her on Sky TV.

"When she was a little girl I hoped that she would become a gymnast. She was always a tomboy, climbing everything and wrestling with her brothers."

Miss Messenger: "For once, Swindon was the place to be"

Judge refuses to return abused pony to owner

By Kathryn Knight

A JUDGE refused to return a neglected Welsh pony to its owner yesterday and instead said the charity that rescued it from starvation could look after it.

Animal lovers cheered as Judge John Evans ruled that Target, a four-year-old Welsh stallion, could stay with the Society for the Welfare of Horses and Ponies, which had refused to hand it back to its owner, Anthony Probert, after he was convicted of cruelty.

Mr Probert had sued for the return of the pony, which is now fully restored to health, and said he needed it for breeding purposes. But yesterday after hearing that when Target was rescued the animal was so weak it could not stand up and ate wood shavings from hunger, the judge said the charity could keep the horse and pay Mr Probert £250 damages.

'I am anxious that the law is not made to look an ass, although it may end up looking that way," Judge Evans told Pontypool County Court to laughter from the public gallery.

Animal lovers had collected a 40,000-name petition backing the charity's refusal to return Target. The court was told that RSPCA inspectors found the horse weak and starving in a field near Abergavenny, Monmouthshire. They had to stretcher it away as it could not stand and it was placed in the care of the Monmouth-based society, which restored it to health. It has since kept Target hidden. Mr Probert was fined £1,200 by Pontypool magistrates last year but told the judge he still did not accept he had neglected Target. He said that the horse charity and the RSPCA had ignored a magistrates' court order that the animal should be returned.

"I am accusing the RSPCA and the society of conspiring together to pervert the course of justice and to steal from me this four-year-old Welsh stallion," he said.

Mr Probert said he estimated the pony's value now at about £800 and wanted it back for breeding purposes.

Gordon Bebb, for the Horse Society, told the judge: "If that horse is returned to Mr Probert it faces exactly the same fate as it suffered in the past; malnutrition and a disgraceful upkeeping."

After the day long hearing, Alisdair MacGregor, a trustee of the horse charity, said it had won a moral victory. "We are delighted because the whole point of our action was that people who have been convicted of neglecting animals should not have a second chance of doing it," he said.

"Very few people at the beginning of our battle gave us much of a chance but we were determined that Target would be protected and would not have to go back to an owner who had so obviously neglected him."

Eyes down as student wins bingo fellowship

By John O'Leary

A MOTHER of three who paid her way through college by working in a bingo club has won Britain's first academic fellowship to study the game.

Faith Freestone, who is about to complete a doctorate on bingo, will spend two years researching the reasons behind the game's popularity and gambling among women. The Bingo Association of Great Britain has put up half the £12,000 cost of a post at Worcester College of Higher Education.

Bingo has been hit hard by the National Lottery, with 75 of the 800 licensed clubs closing and profits dropping by a third in the past two years. But national games with prizes of up to £250,000 have helped to attract a younger generation of players, many of whom are male.

Ms Freestone is unrepentant about her choice of subject, despite academic snobbery. "Millions of people play this game, which is the most popular pastime in Britain after angling, so there should be some proper research on which to base policy decisions.

"People have always mocked it, but a part of me feels that anything that is female-dominated is automatically devalued."

But her expertise has not helped her in other ways. "In all the years I have been playing bingo I have only had two wins, of £5 and £10."

Nobel poet discloses his despair at Bloody Sunday

By Nicholas Watt

SEAMUS HEANEY, the Nobel prizewinning Irish poet, has marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of Bloody Sunday by releasing a previously unpublished poem describing his despair at the shootings.

In *The Road to Derry*, written a quarter of a century ago, Professor Heaney describes his anguish as he drove from Belfast to his home city for the funerals of the 13 unarmed men who were shot dead by paratroopers on January 30, 1972.

Professor Heaney, 57, who was born in Londonderry and educated at the city's St Columb's College, wrote the four verses at the request of Luke Kelly, the late singer with the Irish ballad group The Dubliners. The poet suggested setting the verses to the melody of *The Boys of Mullaghbawn*.

Professor Heaney told the *Derry Journal* that Kelly never recorded the song. He said: "I spoke to Luke about it on one occasion and I remember him saying that he thought the air I had suggested was too slow. Anyway, I think it is in order to reprint this version now." He has released only the first two and the last *stanzas*.

On a Wednesday morning early I took the road to Derry
Along Glenshane and Foreglen and the cold woods of Hillhead;
A wet wind in the hedges and a dark cloud on the mountain
And flags like black frost mourning that the thirteen men were dead.

The Roe wept at Dungiven and the Foyle cried out to heaven,
Burntollet's old wound opened and again the Bogside bled;
By Shipquay Gate I shivered and by Lone Moor I enquired
Where I might find the coffins where the thirteen men lay dead.

My heart besieged by anger, my mind a gap of danger,
I walked among their old haunts, the home ground where they bled;
And in the dirt lay justice like an acorn in the winter
Till its oak would sprout in Derry where the thirteen men lay dead.

Seamus Deane, the award-winning author from the Bogside who was shortlisted for this year's Booker Prize, is taking part in this weekend's commemorative events in the city and will read from his works at a community centre this afternoon. He said in the *Derry Journal* that Bloody Sunday showed that a "right-wing, Tory-Unionist faction" believed, and still believes, in "coercion and cosmetic reform" in Northern Ireland.

He wrote: "There will be no apology for Bloody Sunday; the only sorrow to be found in Tory or Unionist breasts is that it was not successful as an act of terror."

Picking up the Pieces, Magazine, page 16

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Lip-reading computer will help the big noises in the City

By Nick Nuttall
Technology Correspondent

A COMPUTER that can lip-read has been developed by British scientists in a breakthrough that could take humans and machines into new realms. Researchers at the University of East Anglia in Norwich have developed a system that can recognise letters and words, even when uttered by someone with a large moustache.

The development, by a team in the university's school of information systems, is part of a worldwide race to develop computers able to interact with humans without the need of a traditional keyboard. The applications could be limitless in businesses such as banking, security surveillance, city dealing rooms and home computing.

Dr Andrew Bangham, one of the scientists behind the breakthrough, said yesterday that their lip-reading computer and camera appeared to be in the lead. The nearest rival can lip-read only the numbers one to ten, whereas the Norwich model has been taught to recognise numbers and the entire alphabet.

The system, which uses a new mathematical strategy to detect the letter or word being spoken by measurements of the mouth, has been developed to complement speech recognition computers that are already on the market, such as one from IBM and another from the American company Dragon.

These are considered to have limits that lip-reading should help to overcome. Dr Bangham said that speech recognition computers were really accurate only in silent rooms with the speaker holding the microphone right up the mouth.

If the room becomes noisy, as in most daily uses, the accuracy plummets. Lip-reading should boost the accuracy despite the noise of real life.

Dr Bangham likened it to asking someone if they would like a drink at a noisy cocktail party: "You can understand their reply even if you can't hear them very well, because human beings use a lot of visual cues in understanding conversations."

Tests have found that speech recognition has an accuracy of 87 per cent. If the British system is asked to lip-read, the accuracy is 40 per cent. But the real value is when the two different systems are combined in a simulation of a noisy room.

The accuracy of speech recognition in a noisy room is 25 per cent or less, but lip-reading is unaffected by the noise. Dr Bangham said: "If you use a combination of the visual and the speech recognition, then your accuracy rate goes up to about 60 per cent in a noisy environment."

He said that the development was made possible by a new mathematical strategy. Rival systems try to fit the speaker's mouth and its shape to computer-generated lips in order to assess the word or letter being uttered. However, this can be problem, especally in challenging cases, such as when the person who is speaking has a large moustache or an inexpressive mouth.

The Norwich computer makes about ten measurements of the mouth. The total measurements differ depending on the letter or word that is being spoken. The computer then decides what is being said.

Dr Bangham said they were training the computer to boost the accuracy further, by presenting it with the speech patterns of both men and women.

Exotic shopping centre heralded in play to catch the consumer-consciousness of a king

Rediscovered: work of art that blessed the mall

By Dalya Alberge
Arts Correspondent

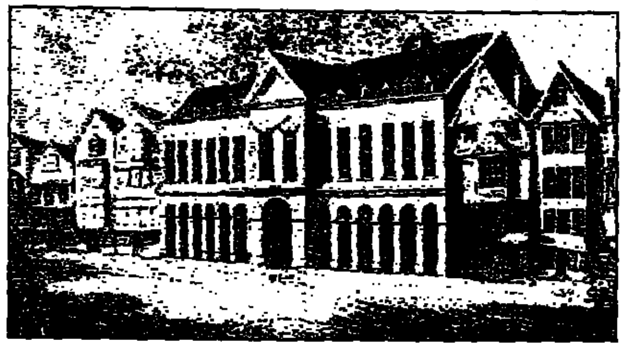
A LOST playlet of 1609 by the English dramatist Ben Jonson, commissioned to celebrate and advertise the opening of a shopping arcade along the Strand in central London, has been discovered in the Public Record Office.

A dusty, scrappy four-page manuscript of the short comedy play, or masque, was identified by James Knowles, a lecturer at Newcastle University who specialises in 17th-century drama. It had lain unnoticed among state papers donated 130 years ago to the Record Office. It was commissioned to trumpet the opening of an arcade that disappeared in the mid 19th century.

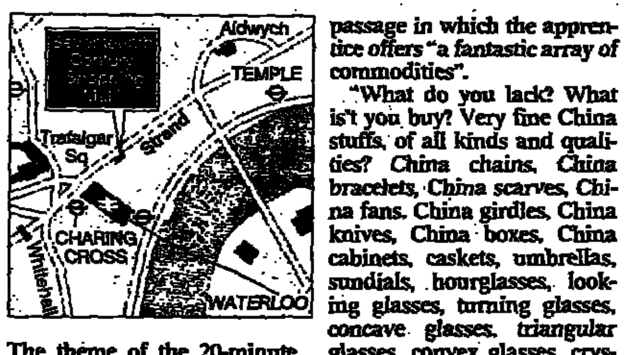
Jonson (1572-1637), author of *Volpone* and *The Alchemist* and regarded by many of his contemporaries as Shakespeare's equal, wrote the masque for The New Exchange otherwise known as Britain's Burse [an obsolete form of "bourse"], "a high-class shopping-mall with a milliner's, a haberdasher's, a bookshop and shops for Chinese porcelain", to which lines in his masque refer. King James I, and an audience of 100 from his court, attended its solitary performance.

Dr Knowles said: "It is very exciting to think more Jonson is to be found out there. It's as good as patches of *The Alchemist*."

The two-storey Burse, he said, housed up to 30 shops.



A plan of the Strand, showing the site of The New Exchange at 56-64, celebrated in Jonson's masque



The theme of the 20-minute work, headed *The Key Keeper*, "a comic harangue of welcome" to James I, is the exoticism and excitement of the shops. "It's a consumerist masque saying that shopping is wonderful," Dr Knowles said.

The 20-minute piece is written in prose, which Dr Knowles noted as unusual for Jonson, and was staged by three players in the roles of a merchant, an apprentice and a key-keeper. He picked out a passage in which the apprentice offers "a fantastic array of commodities".

"What do you lack? What is't you buy? Very fine China stuffs, of all kinds and qualities? China chains, China bracelets, China scarves, China fans, China girdles, China knives, China boxes, China cabinets, caskets, umbrellas, sundials, hourglasses, looking glasses, turning glasses, concave glasses, triangular glasses, convex glasses, crystal globes, waxen pictures, Estrich eggs, Birds of Paradise, Muskads, Indian mice, Indian rats, China dogs and China cats?"

Ian Donaldson, who is preparing a Jonson biography for Oxford University Press and who has edited his poetry and prose for various editions, noted that the passage about "China stuffs" was reminiscent of lines from *Bartholomew Fair*, a work of 1614: "What do you lack? What is't you buy? What do you lack? Rattles, drums ... Fiddles o' th' finest."

Scholars knew of the work's existence from contemporary documents, including a report by the Venetian Ambassador and a bill detailing, for example, the keeper's costume: it included buskins, a cassock, doublet, breeches, an old man's beard, hair and nightcap.

The manuscript, Dr Knowles said, is not in Jonson's handwriting but a contemporary copy. It was enclosed in a letter to Sir Edward Conway (1564-1631), a collector of manuscripts and later Secretary of State under James I and Charles I. "He liked to collect poetry, masques and works of political significance. This masque has political significance, commenting on the American and Far Eastern trade."

The arcade was built by an unknown architect for Robert Cecil, 1st Earl of Salisbury: an early, unexecuted design by Inigo Jones survives in Oxford, and a drawing by Robert Smythson gives an impression of the actual Burse. Cecil got his secretary, Thomas Wilson, to supervise the project. Wilson reported to him on March 31, 1609: "The design is to have three persons only actors, according to your conceit."

The Ambassador also described the building: "Hard by the Court, the Earl of Salisbury has built two great galleries, decorated, especially outside, with much carving and sculpture. Inside each of these galleries, on either hand, are rows of shops for the sale of all kinds of goods. These will bring an immense revenue."

MARY EVANS PICTURE LIBRARY

Ben Jonson, whose manuscript is "as good as *The Alchemist*" in parts

John Sargent, senior librarian at the City of Westminster Archives Centre, whose collection includes references to the Burse, pinpointed the original site to 56-64 Strand, on its south side. Today, its occupants include the solicitors Fishburn Boxer, Top Shop, Pizza Hut and the Halifax Building Society.

An essay by Dr Knowles on the masque is published in *The Times Literary Supplement* on Friday.

Leading article, page 23

Councillors scrap grant for gay trip

By Ian Murray

COUNCIL leaders withdrew an education grant for a youth group's "gay weekend" in Amsterdam yesterday. Camden Council, which is planning school budget cuts of £4 million, had previously granted £500 to send ten homosexuals to the Dutch capital to "experience holding hands in the street without feeling fear".

The young men aged 17 to 24 belong to the Male Out Group of Somers Town, run by the north London Labour council. They had applied to an education subcommittee for travel expenses, saying: "The trip will be to enable young men to experience an environment where lesbian and gay sexuality is equally valid as heterosexual expression."

The subcommittee nodded through the application as part of its £28,000 funding for youth groups. But the Labour group reconsidered the decision after criticism from opposition councillors. A spokesman said: "It was felt that it was not an appropriate way to spend funds given the restriction on resources."

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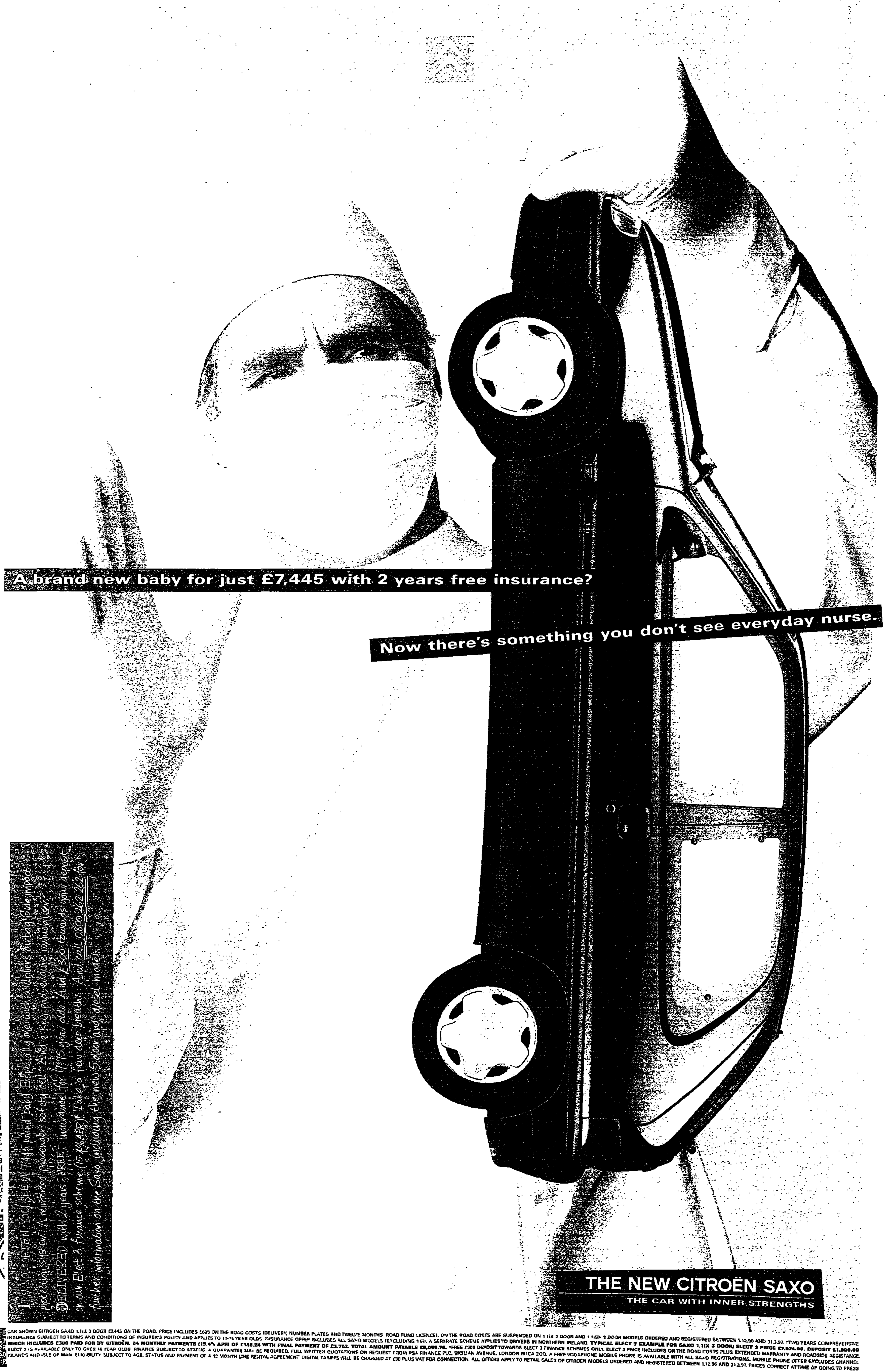

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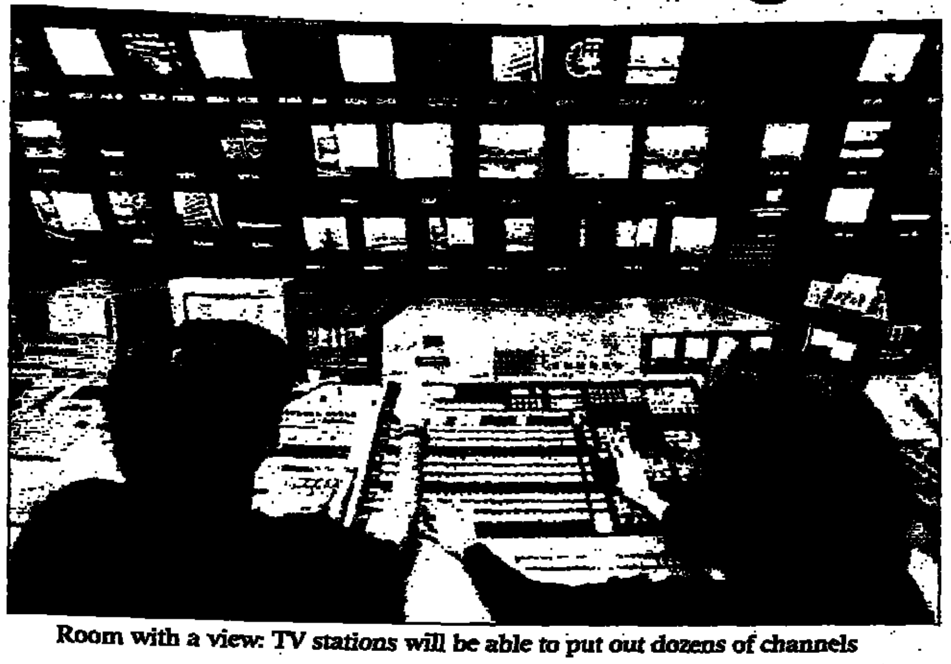
TV rivals signal start of digital revolution



Room with a view: TV stations will be able to put out dozens of channels

Price of more choice will be the spread of pay-per-view

By Alexandra Frean, media correspondent

TWO RIVAL consortia entered the race yesterday for the digital frequencies which will allow television viewers to receive up to 30 additional paid-for channels on existing sets.

The ITV companies Carlton and Granada have banded together with the satellite television company BSkyB to form British Digital Broadcasting (BDB). The company is planning to offer 15 paid-for digital television channels. A rival bid for digital frequencies has been submitted to the Independent Television Commission by the cable company CabelTel.

The ITC could decide to split the spectrum available between BDB and DTN, although this may affect the financial viability of both services. It is expected to announce the successful bid in the spring or summer of 1998.

Nigel Walmsley, chairman of Carlton UK Television, said that it had been important to put together an alliance with some of the strongest players and programme line-ups. "If you want to kick-start the engine, you have to put a lot of juice in the tank," he said.

A third bid for a separate part of the digital spectrum was also submitted yesterday by the Welsh broadcaster S4C. This service is required to carry S4C's Welsh television service and the new Channel 5. It will also be providing programming from ITN and the American cable television operator Turner Broadcasting System.

Digital technology will bring a vast expansion of choice for viewers and new forms of income for broadcasters. Analogue terrestrial broadcasting will eventually be replaced, requiring all viewers to replace their set or buy a set-top box decoder. Digital broadcasting compresses broadcasting signals, allowing several channels to be transmitted in the space previously used by one. It will also provide cinema-style, wide-screen pictures.

An Electronic Programme Guide (EPG) built into the set-top boxes will provide on-screen listings to help viewers decide between the myriad channels on offer. Eventually, EPGs will allow audiences to construct their own schedules. Colin Banfield, of the Information Technology consultancy firm Logica, said: "Digital broadcasting will also allow people to watch more than one channel simultaneously. For sports programmes, it will enable viewers to chose camera angle."

Walmsley: Carlton chief also heads BDB

It is forecast that the transition to digital will be complete 15 or 20 years from when it is introduced in 1998. Eventually, analogue broadcasts will be switched off.

Digital television programmes can arrive via cable, satellite or conventional rooftop aerials. There is likely to be a struggle for dominance between operators of all three.

Digital terrestrial services should be available later next year. Viewers will need to buy a decoder box, for £200 to £400, but they will not need a dish or a new aerial. The BBC, ITV, Channel 4, Channel 5 and the Welsh Channel S4C and Teletext will be broadcast on digital terrestrial television and will be available free. Space has been reserved on the digital airwaves for Gaelic programming to be broadcast in Scotland.

The BBC's digital broadcasts of BBC1 and BBC2 will be in cinema-style wide-screen format. The BBC also plans to use its digital capacity to broadcast a 24-hour news channel and educational programmes.

ITV and Channel 4 are planning a mix of free and paid-for services. ITV plans a digital entertainment channel. Channel 4 plans a digital channel showing films and educational programmes.

Up to 15 other digital terrestrial channels will also be launched, all available on a subscription basis.

Satellite television is already available in over five million homes. Viewers have to buy a dish and decoder box and pay a monthly subscription for more than 40 channels.

Satellite is expected to be the first digital service on air. BSkyB plans to introduce up to 200 digital satellite channels within the next year. BSkyB is 40 per cent owned by News International, the ultimate owner of *The Times*.

The channels on offer from BSkyB may also include some BBC-branded services as well as pay-per-view movie and sports channels.

THE BDB PROPOSAL

THE proposed BDB channels are:

☐ **BBC Horizon:** selection of BBC nature, science, history and technology programmes in the evenings. Children's programming in the mornings.

☐ **BBC One TV:** television version of Radio 1, featuring pop music and Radio 1 disc jockeys.

☐ **BBC Showcase** and **BBC Style:** selection of BBC1 and BBC2 programmes with new food and fashion shows.

☐ **Sky 1:** family entertainment programmes, combining American drama, comedy and documentaries with British output.

☐ **Public Eye:** dramas, films and documentaries linked by the theme of law and order, incorporating Sky News in the mornings.

☐ **Granada Plus:** entertainment, comedy and drama classics as well as *Coronation Street*.

☐ **Granada TV Shopping:** teleshopping programmes offering viewers the chance to stroll around a virtual department store.

☐ **Granada Good Life:** lifestyle shows, covering health, fitness, interior design, gardening, cooking and motoring.

☐ **Granada Sports Club:** coverage of news from the country's top football clubs and a night-time music service.

☐ **Carlton Select:** showing original and classic British drama, exclusive special events, such as music and live football, as well as programmes from Carlton's Food Network.

☐ **Carlton Entertainment:** children's programming, drama, comedy and talk programmes.

☐ **Carlton Films:** feature films and television movies.

The company would not disclose yesterday how much the 12 channels in its basic package would cost, but it is likely to be competitive with the pricing for BSkyB's existing satellite services, which cost from £11.99 to £26.99.

BDB is also offering three premium channels, which will be charged at a higher monthly subscription rate than the 12 channels in its basic package. The three premium services include the two film channels, **Sky Movies** and **The Movie Channel**, and **Sky Sports**, which has exclusive live rights to Premiership football.

THE DTN PROPOSAL

DIGITAL Television Network (DTN) is offering a more innovative service, which includes a new range of text channels. Although they include programmes from ITN and some Hollywood films, the channels do not have many names well-known to British audiences.

The DTN channels include:

☐ **The Money Channel:** business and consumer programming.

☐ **The Knowledge Network:** educational programmes.

☐ **The British Sports Channel:** a 24-hour sports and news service.

☐ **The ITN Living History Channel:** promising "the real stories behind recent events" in programmes made by ITN.

☐ **Animal Planet:** wildlife programmes.

☐ **The Box:** music video channel, where the tracks are chosen by viewers telephoning in their requests. Already available on cable.

☐ **Travel:** holiday programmes about British and overseas destinations.

☐ **Digital Box Office:** a pay-per-view service covering films, sport and other big events.

☐ **Turner Classic Movies:** Hollywood films.

☐ **MGM Gold:** entertainment programmes from the MGM studio.

☐ **Cartoon Network:** children's cartoons in the daytime, programmes for adults in the evening. Already available on cable.

☐ **Metro TV:** a local service covering the Greater Manchester area, due to be expanded to other cities.

☐ **The Movie Experience:** this film channel will not be available immediately, but will be added to the package at a later date.

DTN is also promising to offer an extensive collection of 20 data services linked to its televisual channels Money, Knowledge and Sports, Metro and Travel. For example, the Travel text service could provide written information on-screen about holiday destinations shown on the Travel television channel.

It is also planning a home shopping service and a number of national news services. The text services will be linked to CableTel's Internet service, Cable Online.

US model shows that more is less

From Quentin Letts
in New York

TECHNOLOGY may allow for multichannel television, but the standards of American broadcasting raise questions about the ability of programme-makers to keep step with science.

In New York, cable television subscribers can choose from 76 channels, but the quality on many stations is deplorable. Frequent advertising breaks interrupt the "entertainment". Viewers soon learn to channel surf, endlessly pressing the buttons of their TV remote control devices in search of something decent to watch.

The multiplicity of channels allows for specialisation. There is a shopping channel, a black channel, a Spanish channel and a comedy channel. Others carry history programmes, gossip, romantic films, financial news and science fiction. There is a channel devoted entirely to cookery lessons and even a channel which tells you what is on other channels.

While some programmes cater to a specialist audience, others struggle to fill the gap between commercials. The round-the-clock MSNBC news channel, part-owned by the computer billionaire Bill Gates, is little better than an amateur stew of opinions and headline roundups.

At first, British expats may find themselves rejoicing in the wide variety of flickering images on the screen, but after a short period they tend to long for the simplicity of a four-channel choice. If America, with deep finances and its large audiences, is unable to provide quality programming on so many channels, there seems little chance that Britain will be able to approach the task.

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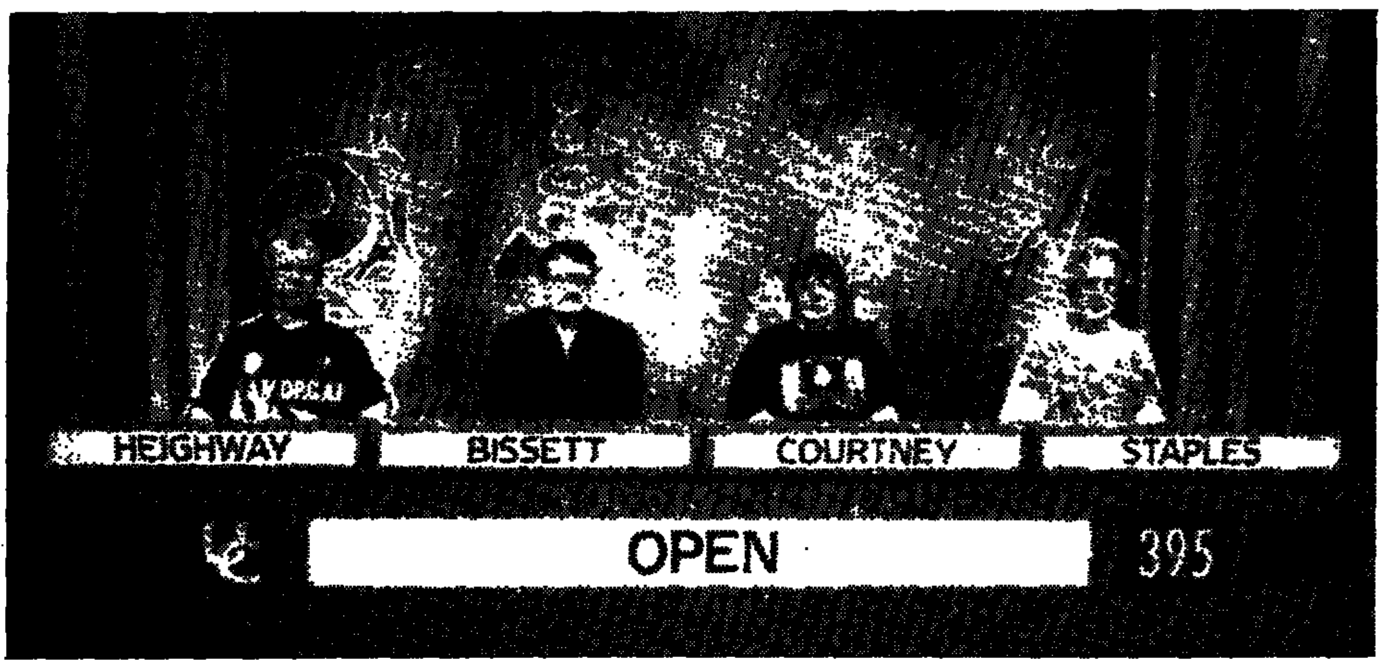

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Wildlife advisers urge ministers to safeguard rare animals and plants from extinction

More than 30 species to join protected list

By Nick Nuttall, environment correspondent

MORE than 30 rare and endangered species are to receive greater protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act. The basking shark, the stag beetle and a rare puffball are among 33 animals and plants proposed for inclusion on the list of protected animals and plants.

Other species include the bluebell, the marsh fritillary butterfly, the pool frog, the water vole, the fiery clearwing moth and the pearl mussel. Only one species is to be taken off the protected list — the *vipers bugloss moth, which no* longer needs safeguarding.

The Joint Nature Conservation Committee, which is recommending the changes to John Gummer, the Environment Secretary, says that the sandy stilt puffball, found at *only three sites in Suffolk and* Somerset, is threatened by collectors. "This fungus is under threat because of its curious appearance and the fact that there are fewer than 20 individual plants known in Britain," it says.

The stag beetle, *Lucanus cervus*, is restricted to a belt across south and southeast England, including the New Forest. "The most pressing threat is the increasing trade in this species, especially on *mainland Europe but also in* Britain. Occasionally it is used for dissection to demonstrate insect structure in educational establishments," the committee says. Its woodland habitat is also under threat from felling and clearance.

The basking shark, Cetorhinus maximus, would be the first shark to be protected by British law. Measuring up to ten metres, *it is the second* largest fish in the world. It is thought to be endangered by demand to supply the lucrative Far Eastern trade in shark fins for soup.

The native pool frog, a green amphibian that enjoys small, sunny, ponds, is extremely rare in Britain; it is either extinct or clinging on in small *numbers at its last known site* in Norfolk. Experts believe there may be other small populations in Norfolk, Cambridgeshire or Lincolnshire. "It is in a very precarious state and very vulnerable to collection," says the report.

The Government is also proposing to protect the water vole, *Arvicola terrestris*, whose numbers have been declining *rapidly in recent years*. The collapse is blamed on predatory mink, pollution and habitat loss.

Other species in line for legal protection are the twaite shad, the giant goby and the Allis shad — all fish; the fan mussel; the marine hydroid; the southern damselfly; the fisher's estuarine moth; and the large copper butterfly. Plants include the south stack fleawort, the long leaved anomodon, flamingo moss, Alpine sulphur-tresses, goblin lights and New Forest beech-lichen.

After a consultation period, during which objections may be lodged by groups such as landowners and farmers, the species should receive protection later this year.

☐ The state of Queensland in Australia is to protect the *deadly Great White Shark* from an even deadlier enemy — man. Fines of up $75,000 (£35,700) will be imposed on anyone found killing the fish, whose numbers are declining. The Great White is already protected in New South Wales.

Species at risk: the marsh fritillary butterfly, the water vole and the stag beetle

The pool frog may already be extinct. Its only known habitat is in Norfolk

Give me the moonlight and the nightjars – and leave the rest to nature

By Nick Nuttall, environment correspondent

NIGHTJARS measure out their lives by the phases of the moon, scientists said yesterday. Researchers have found that these rare, nocturnal birds time their mating, egg *laying and feeding of their* hatchlings with the waxing and waning of the moon.

The researchers believe that other nocturnal birds may also plan families around the brightness of the full moon. Dr Humphrey Crick, of the British Trust for Ornithology, one of the researchers, said: "We have found they are *synchronising with the moon* and this has a number of distinct advantages."

By timing mating, laying and feeding with the brightest nights, the birds have a better chance of catching food for themselves and their offspring, thereby increasing their chances of raising a healthy brood. In addition, the young nightjars are, at about six weeks old, forced *out of the nest to survive on* their own. This is also timed by the arrival of the next full moon so that the inexperienced birds have the best chance of catching enough food to survive.

Some fish, such as the California grunion, seem to co-ordinate mating with the lunar cycle, and shellfish, like barnacles, are atuned to the tides, which are regulated by *the moon. However, this is* believed to be the first research showing that a bird is also influenced by the 28½-day lunar cycle. The findings, published in the journal *The Auk*, have come from Professor Chris Perrins, of the Edward Grey Institute of Field Ornithology at Oxford University, and the British Trust for Ornithology, at Thetford, Norfolk.

*The researchers studied in*formation from the Nest Record Card Survey, data, dating back to 1939, collected by birdwatchers in Britain and covering 464 cases of nightjar nesting and laying in mainly Surrey, Hampshire and Nottinghamshire. Nightjars, a rare bird with about 3,400 pairs in Britain, hunt by *night, feeding on moths and* other night-flying insects.

Dr Crick said that radio tracking of the birds showed they hunted by sight. "They sit on perches, rather like spotted flycatchers, and fly out and catch moths as they fly past. When it is pitch black, they fly around with their mouths wide open, trawling. This is *not very efficient.*"

The researchers found that nightjars mate and lay their eggs in June, some five to seven days before the approaching full moon, which is around the middle of the month. The eggs take about 18 days to hatch. Approximately ten days later "the young are quite big and need a lot of food. This coincides with the *next full moon*," Dr Crick said.

At six weeks old the young nightjars are given their marching orders. This coincides with another full moon, the researchers found.

The scientists believe that the nightjars must be sensitive to the moon, able to measure its size or the rise *and fall of its light intensity.*

Moonstruck: the nightjar

Feather report
Weekend, page 6

NEWS IN BRIEF

Five face affray charges

Four men and a woman were remanded in custody yesterday after an incident at a London restaurant.

They appeared before Marlborough Street magistrates, charged with affray at the Quo Vadis restaurant in Soho on Thursday. Two were also charged with common assault: and one of these faces a charge of criminal damage.

Quo Vadis, where the artist Damien Hirst's cow's heads in formaldehyde are displayed, *has been a focus for protests.*

River suspect

Clifford Harris, the Briton found dead in a river in Perth, Australia, and who had been sought by police in connection with the murder of a woman found on his farm in Devon, died of asphyxiation, Australian *police said. He is thought* to have killed himself.

Stunt damages

The producers of *Frankenstein — The Real Story* have won £270,000 damages at the *High Court from* Effects Associates Ltd, a special effects company, after a sledge upturned during a chase scene, breaking the arm of Patrick Bergin, the film's star.

Women killed

Five teenagers have been charged after two elderly women were knocked down and killed by a stolen car which mounted the pavement in Port Seton, East Lothian. The *victims* were named as Marion McPhee and Sarah Imrie, both 76.

Dateline death

John Patterson, founder of the computer dating agency Date*line, has died of a heart attack*, aged 51. Mr Patterson, of Bicester, Oxfordshire, set up the agency in 1966 after observing the difficulties of shy students trying to find partners. Obituary, page 25

Dialysis break

Butlin's has installed three dialysis machines costing £48,000 at its resort in Bognor Regis to allow people with kidney problems to take ex*tended holidays. Butlin's may* extend the machines, which are run by a team of nurses, to its other centres.

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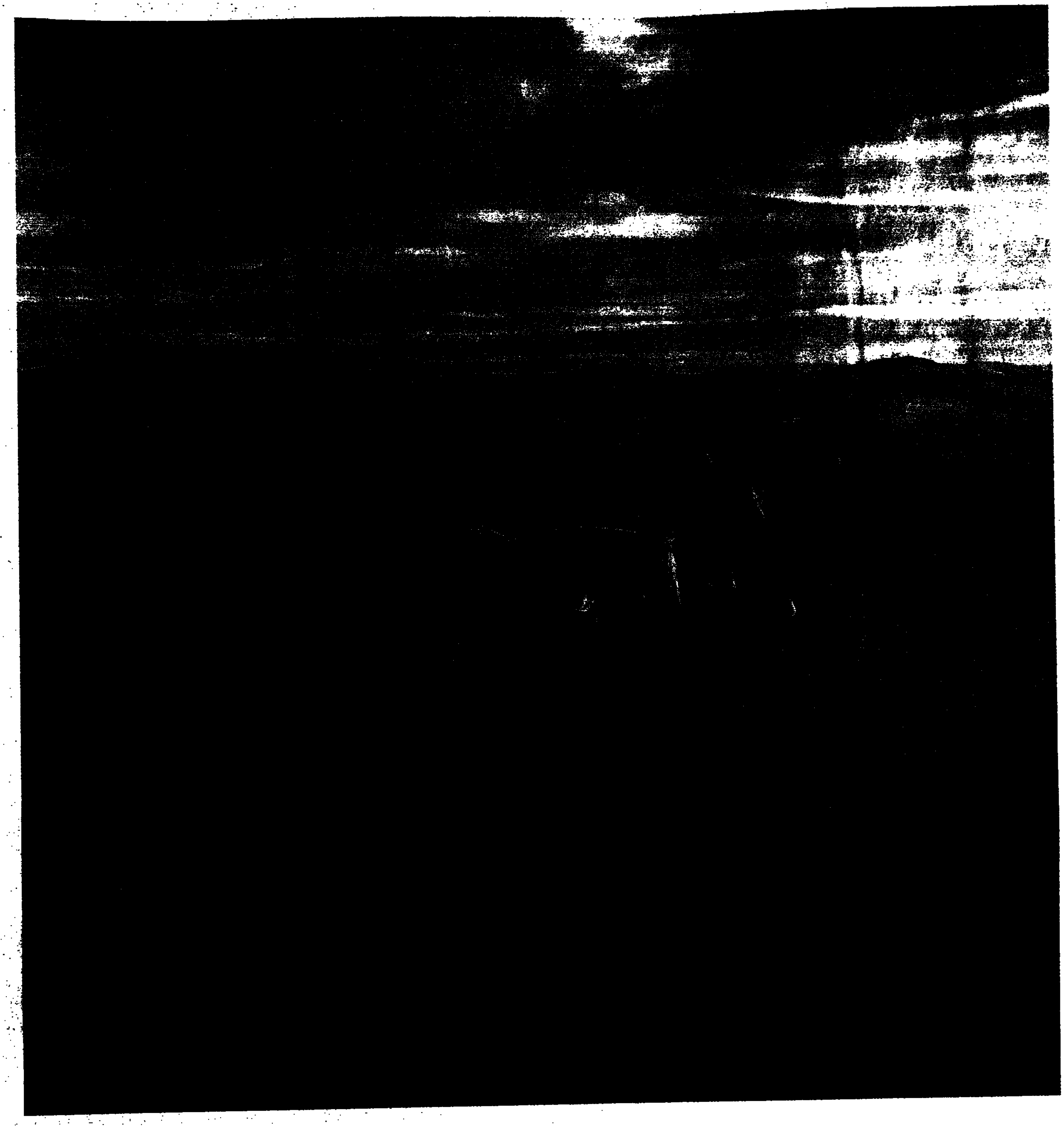

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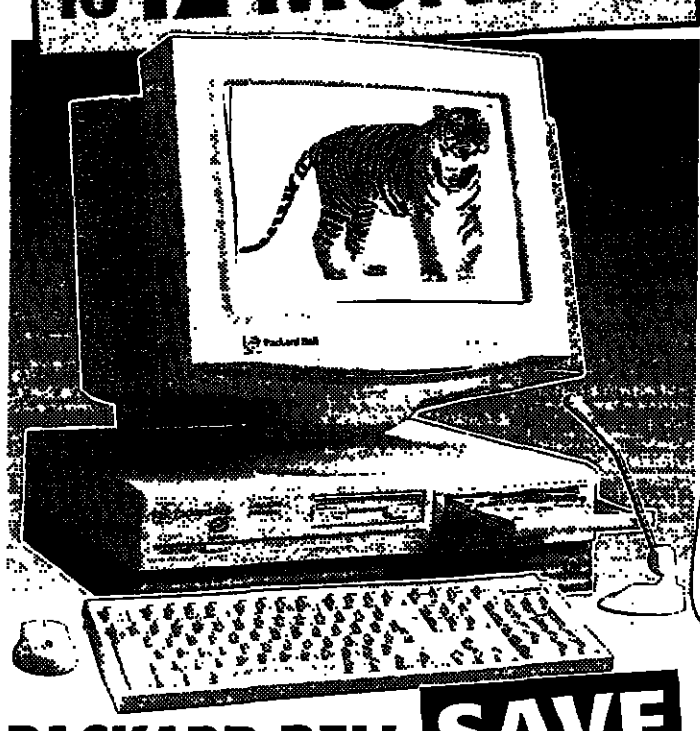

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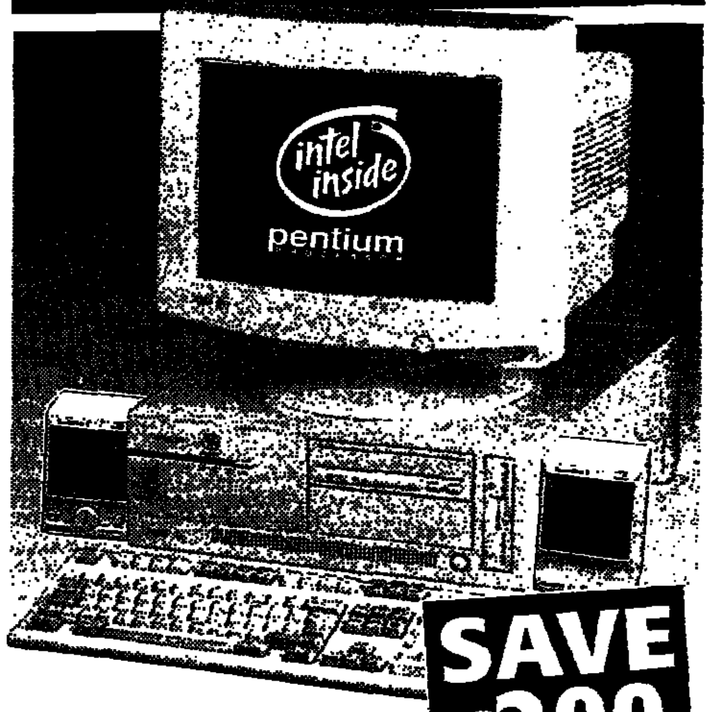

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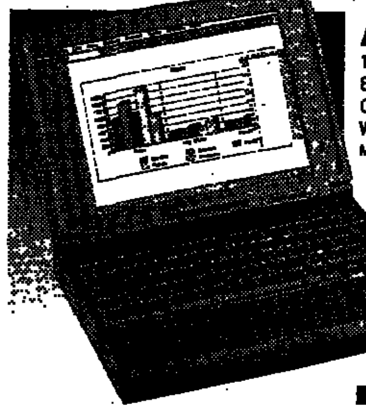

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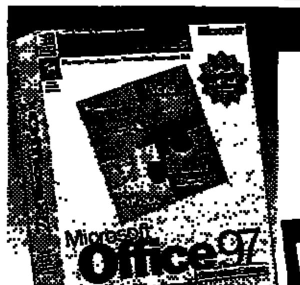

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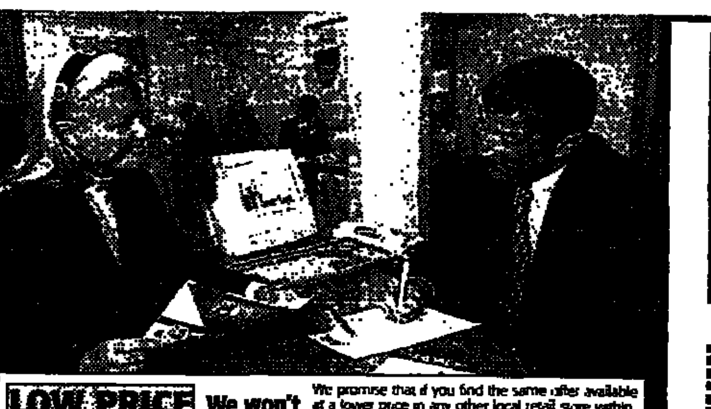

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Palmtop computers help to lift school reading standards

By David Charter, Education Correspondent

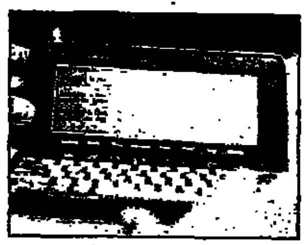
READING standards of children in inner-city schools has been improved by a project giving seven-year-olds their own handheld computer *notebooks*.

Youngsters more used to Sega games than short stories are reading at a *significantly* higher level since they received their computers. They are also borrowing more library books.

The £200 palmtop computers particularly encourage *children* who struggled to write clearly but are now finding that they can communicate *more easily* by typing their work.

Acorn Pocket Books are used by 600 children in three *London* boroughs for writing exercises in class. They are also used for homework which *is then downloaded* at school.

Inspectors last year heavily criticised standards in two of the boroughs involved, Tower Hamlets and Southwark, because many children were two years behind in reading by the time they reached secondary school.


The computers also help children to write

Ray Barker, director of the *Docklands Learning* Acceleration Project, said: "When we looked at the way children learnt from the age of five, they were falling behind by four months every year, so they would be two years behind by the time they went to secondary school. A year on the decline had been halted."

Researchers said yesterday that the rise in standards they observed was irrespective of the children's home background. The technology seemed to overcome social factors often associated with poor literacy. Many of the children were from ethnic backgrounds and they also improved at a similar rate.

None of the computers was stolen.

Mr Barker added: "We seem to have *found* equal access to literacy for children because the technology is not judgmental. People generally come with a preconceived notion of what they expect from children, for example, if *they are from an ethnic* background they might believe they would have difficulty with reading and give them an easier book to read. The technology does not have these expectations. Suddenly there is no excuse for children under-achieving."

The project is funded by the National Literacy Association, a lobby group backed by teaching unions and others.

ROBIN MAYES

Pupils at Winsor primary in East Ham, Newham, using computer notebooks

Couple's wedding vows may be valid

By Ruth Gledhill

A COUPLE whose wedding was conducted by a non-ordained student might be validly married, Church of England lawyers have said.

Rod Earnshaw and Shirley Wilson, both 25, were threatening legal action against the Church after they feared that their £8,000 wedding at Golcar, west Yorkshire, was *not valid because it had been* conducted by Steve Grant when the vicar failed to arrive on time. However, church lawyers said that if the couple had believed Mr Grant to be ordained, the marriage could stand in church law.

The possible loophole for Mr Grant, a 20-year-old history student, is disclosed in a letter to *The Times* today by Canon William Price, one of his tutors. He cites Halsbury's *Ecclesiastical Law*, which makes it clear *that a church marriage* by a person who is not ordained is void. However, exceptions have been made.

Letters, page 23

THE SUNDAY TIMES

Dudley's loveless childhood

The comedian and Hollywood star Dudley Moore reveals the truth about his harrowing early years, in an exclusive interview in tomorrow's Sunday Times

THE SUNDAY TIMES *IS* THE SUNDAY PAPERS

Safety fears over tunnel force new delays at A30 site

By Stephen Farrell

FEARS that a tunnel previously occupied by protesters at the A30 *site is still unsafe* has delayed clearance work.

Although the last of five activists hidden in tunnels was evicted on Thursday night, specialists believe that the 30ft tunnel known as Big Momma needs to be made safe before work on the £65 million Exeter to Honiton road scheme can *begin*.

Mark Clark, spokesman for the under-sheriff of Devon, said: "It will take at least two days to shore up the passageways and make sure there is nothing inside. Then we can send in the heavy machines, collapse the tunnels and dig it out."

The security operation at Fairmile, the last of three protest camps on the route, *has cost tens of thousands of* pounds each day, although the number of police and private security guards was yesterday reduced from a total of 200 to about 50 security guards and eight police officers.

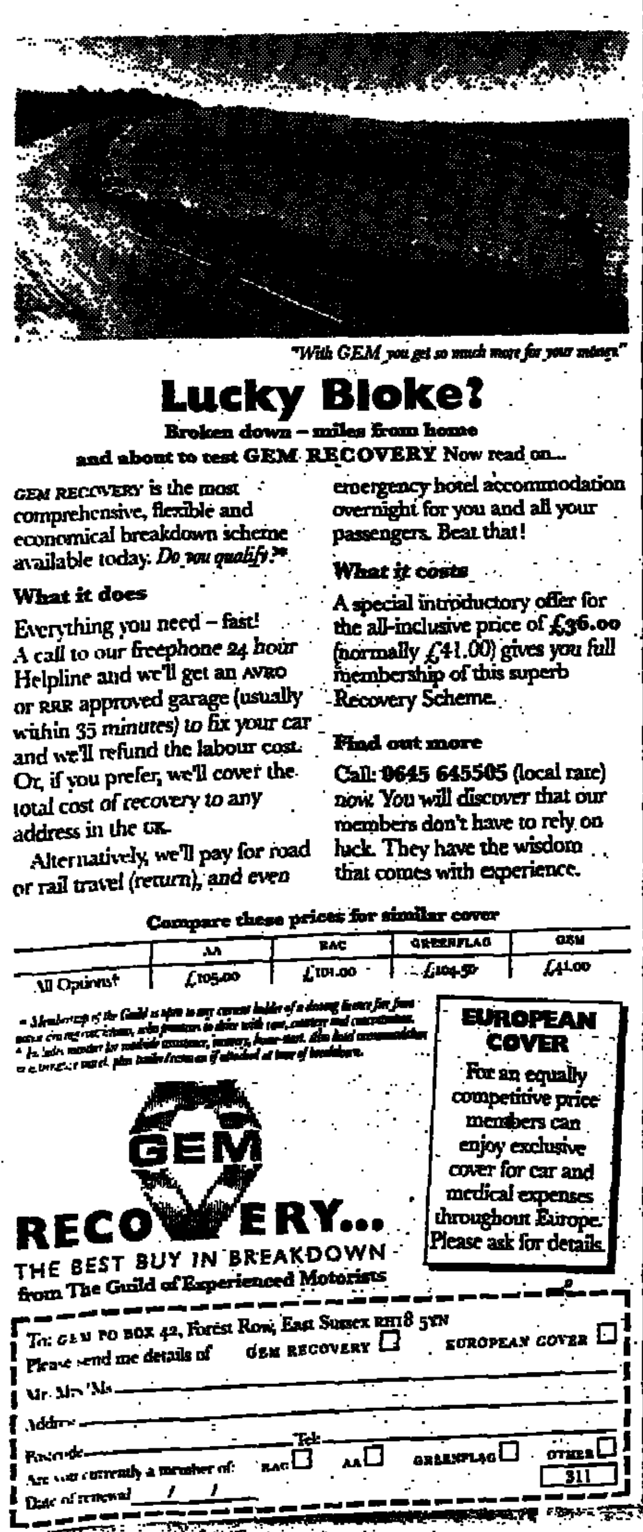
Trevor Coleman, the under-sheriff, denied that the protesters had won a victory by delaying work *and publicising* their cause. "We are very pleased to have completed our task in exactly one hour less than one week. We had feared the job could take several *weeks, and compared with the evictions* at Newbury last year this has been relatively quick," he said.

Swampy, the last protester evicted, was yesterday being questioned by Thames Valley Police over alleged criminal damage to a theodolite at the Newbury bypass protest in *Berkshire last* year.

The 23-year-old, real name Daniel Hooper, was taken into custody after being granted bail by Exeter magistrates for obstruction at Fairmile on January 30. Three road protesters in the public gallery applauded his appearance.

"Nick" Sanders, who appeared for Mr Hooper, said: "Although he was one of the more notorious Fairmile protesters *everything* was dealt with in a friendly and reasonable manner." Mr Hooper was brought to the surface after spending seven nights underground.

Two protesters were last night on hunger strike in Exeter prison after being taken into custody when they *broke* bail *conditions* and returned to the Fairmile Camp earlier this week. A vigil was held outside by other activists.



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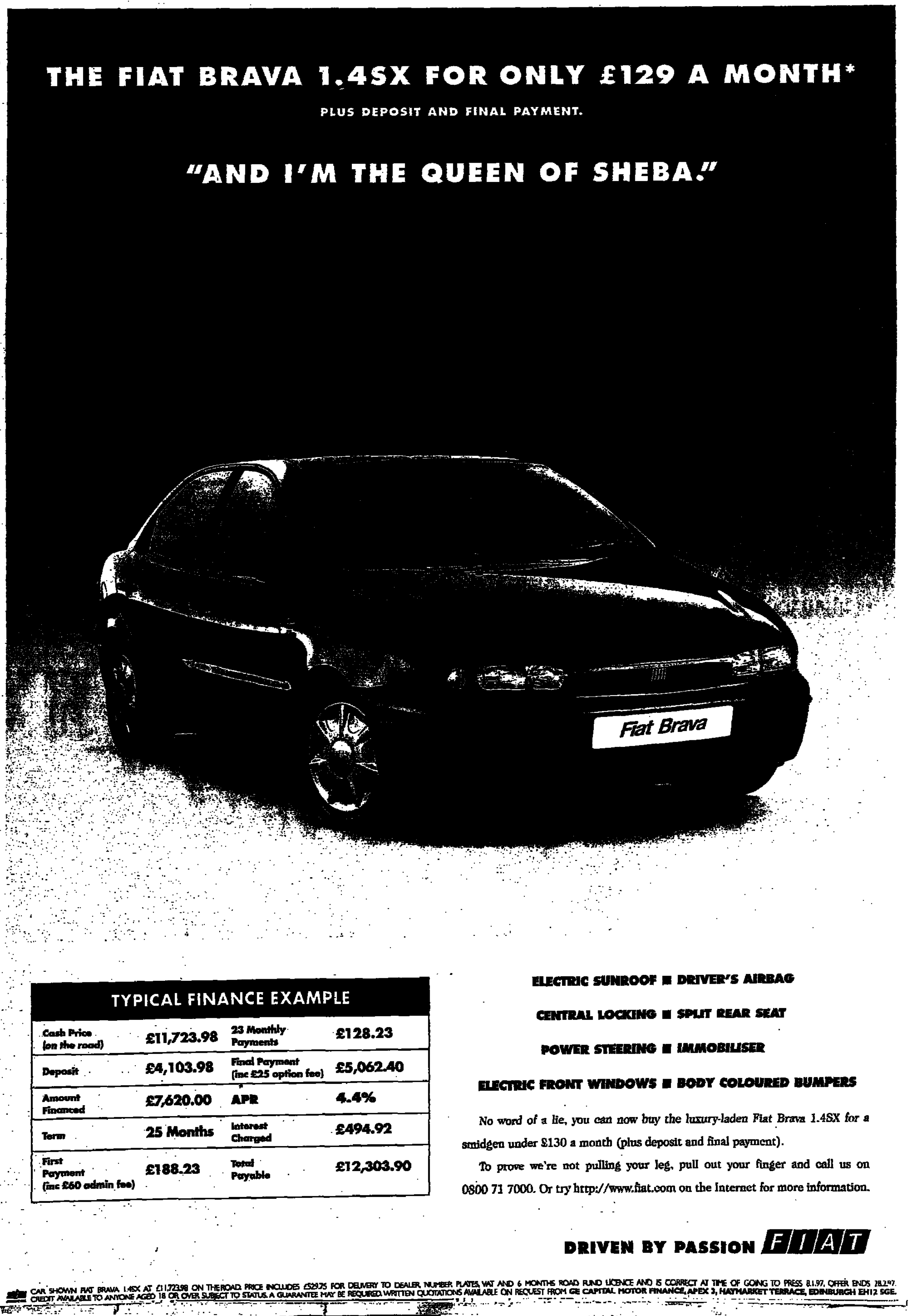

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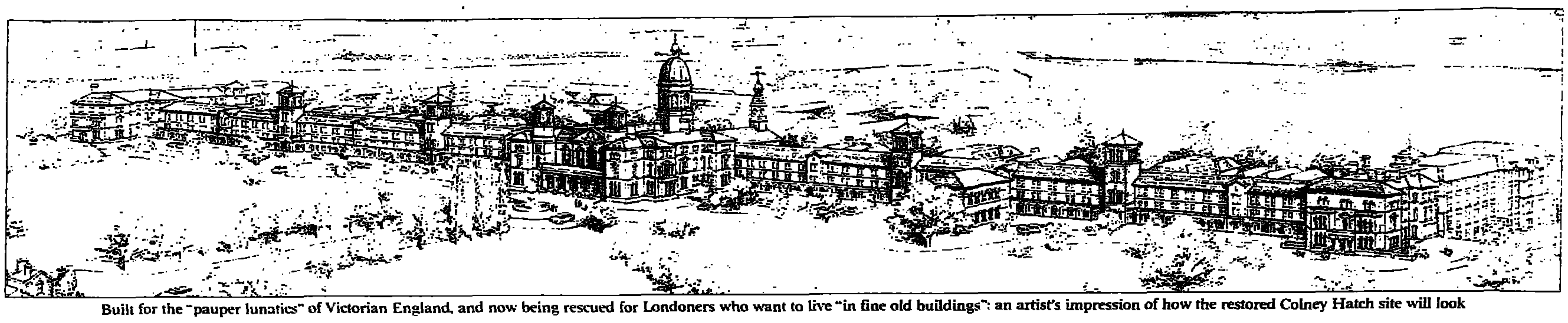
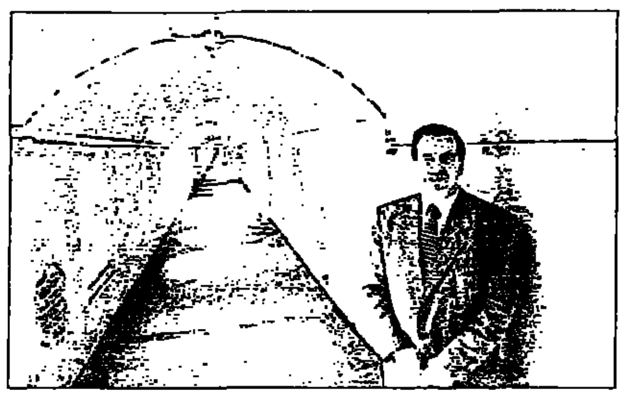


Built for the "pauper lunatics" of Victorian England, and now being rescued for Londoners who want to live "in fine old buildings": an artist's impression of how the restored Colney Hatch site will look

Britain's most famous Victorian asylum to become apartments



Luke Comer inside the building. He has made offers on several other former asylums

By Marcus Binney

A GIANT lunatic asylum is to be rescued from dereliction and converted into 250 flats. The original residents of Colney Hatch were paupers. The newest will pay as much as £300,000.

In Victorian times "Colney Hatch for you" meant "You're mad". Colney even replaced bedlam as the popular term for a madhouse. Built with ten million bricks in 1851, the year of the Great Exhibition, it was to house 1,200 patients. Yet far from being grim and prison-like, the 1,883ft-long North London building was set in 138 acres of landscaped grounds, offered numerous entertainments for its inmates and had its own beer cellar. So many foreign visitors came to see the humane treatment on offer that a special guidebook was published.

Its purchase by the Irish entrepreneur Luke Comer has come as a surprise conclusion to a six-year planning battle during which the health authorities sold off a large part of the grounds for development and demolished more than half the buildings in a misguided effort to make the property easier to sell. The hospital has been vandalised and partly burnt during the six years it has stood empty. Everything demolished will now be replaced.

The conversion plans have been drawn up by Peter Smith, the architect who led the hard-fought but successful restoration of Alexandra Palace, on a hill just to the south. Mr Comer said: "Quite a number of the flats will have living rooms of nearly 1,000 sq ft, as large as many houses. There is nothing that can't be restored. A lot of the windows are oak. Prices will range from just under £100,000 to over £300,000."

Before Colney, "pauper lunatics" had been housed in prisons, workhouses and houses of correction. The new hospital was based on a principle of "no restraint". Patients were told by the chaplain that they would enjoy "pleasant conversations, amusing books, diverting games and outdoor exercise". The hospital had its own farm, workshops and laundries. There were fêtes, dances, concerts, lectures and lantern shows. Patients were allowed out with a nurse to visit relatives on their birthdays.

In the centre was a large exercise hall with a stage for an orchestra. The Italianate building with belvedere towers was designed by Samuel Whitfield Dawkes, architect of the palatial seat of the Earls of Dudley at Great Witley, preserved as a ruin by English Heritage after a fire.

In 1937, Colney became Friern Barnet mental hospital. Now the former chapel will be converted to a swimming pool and gymnasium. To the north of the magnificent entrance front, 36 acres of parkland will be open to the public. Mr Comer worked as a sub-contractor on the restoration of 17th century Kilmainham Hospital in Dublin. In London, he has just finished converting into 134 flats a former mental asylum at Ealing, also a listed building, renamed Osterley Views.

"We have made offers on a number of asylums," said the developer, who is not worried about any stigma attaching. "In the west of Ireland, where I come from, people might be a bit suspicious. In London, there are plenty of punters wanting to live in fine old buildings. We have even thought of naming it The Asylum. It means haven of rest, after all."

Jews agree to differ in dispute over Gryn tribute

By Ruth Gledhill

AN END to a dispute which has divided the Jewish community since the death of Rabbi Hugo Gryn, the Holocaust survivor, appeared to be in sight yesterday.

The Chief Rabbi, Jonathan Sacks, who heads the Orthodox United Synagogue, has been condemned by the right wing of the Orthodox movement for his decision to attend a commemorative meeting for the late Dr Gryn, a prominent and popular leader of progressive jewry. The protest from the strictly Orthodox has surprised Jews and non-Jews.

The Orthodox Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations, which believes that the only guarantee for Jewish survival is adherence to the precise letter of written and oral Jewish law, opposes Dr Sacks's attendance because it fears it lends Orthodox endorsement to Dr Gryn's more liberal Reform movement. The union said it understood Dr Sacks's predicament but was "bound to condemn" his decision, although it did not insist that he should not go.

The president of the United Synagogue, Elkan Levy, and the officers said they were fully supportive of Dr Sacks.

Up to 1,200 jobs to go in migration offices

By Richard Ford

TWELVE Hundred jobs are to be cut in the immigration department as a result of the introduction of a computer system for asylum and nationality cases.

Up to 750 adminstrative personnel are expected to lose their jobs, mostly at the department's offices in Croydon, south London. Senior officials at the Home Office said they hoped that all the jobs could be lost through voluntary redundancy, at a cost of £22 million.

Sir Richard Wilson, Permanent Secretary at the Home Office, said that the job losses would not occur among staff at entry ports but among those dealing with immigration and asylum casework. He said: "At the moment it is a very old-fashioned paper-based system. They have a lot of people dealing with large files." The new technology would allow a much better service to be provided.

Voluntary redundancy will also be offered to staff in other areas, including Prison Service headquarters, certain jails and drugs prevention teams.

Civil service unions condemned the proposed job cuts which, they said, came at a time of huge backlogs in dealing with cases.

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Debate on Europe reveals hostility of Tory peers

■ John Major's policy on the EU came under heavy attack in a well-attended Lords debate. Many peers called for outright withdrawal. James Landale and Alice Thomson report

TORY divisions over Europe spilt into the House of Lords yesterday when peers debated Britain's membership of the European Union.

In a heated 6½-hour debate attended by almost 200 peers, senior Tories attacked John Major's "wait and see" policy on a single currency and many called for Britain to withdraw from Brussels completely. The Lords voted by 52 to 51 to give a second reading to the Bill.

The debate was attended, but not voted on, by Baroness Thatcher, the former Prime Minister, and many former Cabinet ministers on both sides of the House as well as former MEPs and former diplomats.

The Bill was introduced by the arch-Eurosceptic **Lord Pearson of Rannoch**, who told peers that his European Communities (Amendment) Bill would be "the first small step on the road back to self-government and freedom". It would repeal crucial sections of the European Communities Act 1972, under which EU law was made superior to British legislation.

Lord Pearson said: "The Community never gives up the power it has acquired. So the European Union is therefore a quicksand, a quaking bog, which we have entered at our peril. It is politically redundant and for us it is commercially crazy. But there is no way out, short of complete withdrawal," he said.

He denied that the Bill would embarrass the Government. "Only when all the others are convinced that we really are prepared to go, might they agree to the changes we need. But by then it will be obvious that we should go it alone anyway and leave them to their grand but risky design," he said.

"We would go in friendship and then would heave a huge sigh of relief."

Lord Taverne, a Liberal Democrat, called the Bill "shameful and damaging" and moved a wrecking amendment to delay it by six months. He said: "This house plays an important part in our constitution. It's not a school debating society. Yet we are now seriously being asked to behave like a banana republic or the Soviet Union in the days of Stalin and to scrap a treaty which it is said no longer suits us."

He accused Baroness Thatcher of going back on her principles: she had helped to create the single market and brought in the legislation that led to greater majority voting in the EU.

Lord Charteris of Amisfield, a former Private Secretary to the Queen, said that he had voted for joining Europe in the 1975 referendum but membership of the EU was "changing our history, and a great many people do not like it".

Lord Tebbit said that the history of the EU was like a game of rugby. "Year by year, we who defend national sovereignty are being pushed back," he said. "It's time that the ball was kicked very long and very hard back the other way, preferably back into touch for a while, in order that we can think how we can save Europe from itself."

But **Lord Kingsland**, a former leader of the Tory MEPs, argued that Lord Pearson's Bill would leave "whole swaths" of British economic and social activity unregulated by law. He insisted that there had been no loss of sovereignty, as Britain could technically withdraw from the EU at any time.

Earl Clanwilliam, a Tory, said: "We need to be disconnected from Europe before the final and irrevocable signing up to a federal system. We must unite in determining that our Parliament is superior to Brussels." He added that if a single currency went ahead, "there would be a disaster of such proportion that we could not conceive of it".

Baroness Ramsay of Cartvale, a former intelligence officer and friend of John Smith, the former Labour leader, said it was depressing that the future of Britain was being discussed in such a "negative and retrograde" way. "What country can stand alone?" she asked. "Certainly none in Europe. Why should we want to do it when we can have more power, weight and effectiveness in the group?"

Lord Grey, a Tory, said the reality was that a single European state, with the UK as a province, was on the agenda of some of the most ardent Europhiles. "We should demand that our politicians admit the agenda exists, whether they subscribe to it or not, and the electorate must be asked for its opinion."

Viscount Exmouth, a Tory, gave a warning that a single European state would be so unpopular that it would bring "anarchy and civil unrest" to our streets. "Perhaps we should have just handed it all over in 1940, all our sovereignty and independence," he said.

Lord Buxton of Alsa, a Tory, said that Whitehall had become an ally of Brussels, rendering politicians powerless.

Lord Willoughby de Broke, a Tory, dismissed claims that Britain's sovereignty could be pooled with Europe. "I cannot understand how you can pool sovereignty any more than you can pool virginity. You either have it or you don't."

Gardiner's deselection regrettable says Portillo

By James Landale, Political Reporter

MICHAEL PORTILLO yesterday voiced his support for Sir George Gardiner, the veteran Eurosceptic deselected as the Tory MP for Reigate.

Only hours after John Major refused to express any sadness at the MP's political demise, the Defence Secretary said that he was sorry at Sir George's fate after giving such good service to his constituents, and called for tolerance in the Tory party "towards a very broad strand of opinion".

His remarks came as Tory officials in Reigate began moves to find a new candidate as swiftly as possible before the election. The constituency is likely to be flooded with would-be Tory MPs keen to pick up the safe Surrey seat, which has a majority of 17,664.

Although Mr Portillo said that Sir George had been wrong to make some "unwise and rude" remarks about Mr Major, he indicated that the Conservative Party should be a "broad church".

He said during a visit to Lancashire: "I believe we are a tolerant party and I am sorry to see people being asked to leave their seats after they have given good service to their constituents. I hope we can continue to show tolerance towards a very broad strand of opinion."

Mr Portillo was visiting the by-election seat of Wirral South to support the Tory candidate, Les Byrom. Mr Byrom and Eric Forth, the education minister, were turned away from a girls' grammar school by education officials on Thursday when they tried to confront David Blunkett, the Shadow Education Secretary, for a radio interview.

Sir George after the vote he blamed on "entryists"

DAN CHUNG/REUTERS

Read my lips: Michael Portillo makes small talk yesterday at Heswall in the by-election seat of Wirral South

Earlier, at a press conference in London, Mr Major was asked if he was sad that Sir George had been ousted. He expressed no regret and said: "The selection of candidates is a matter entirely and completely for the constituency parties."

Sir George, who lost a deselection motion by 272 to 213 votes on Thursday night after his renewed criticism of the Government, had significantly failed to win the support of Central Office in his readoption campaign.

A senior Tory source said that the dispute had not been a Left v Right contest but "an issue about loyalty to the Prime Minister". Yesterday Sir George refused to comment on his defeat but friends said that he was feeling his usual upbeat self. "He is a warhorse," said one.

The MP blames his defeat on the more than 80 former Tories who rejoined the party in December so that they could vote against him in the first no-confidence motion. These "entryists and wreckers", as Sir George calls them, could not vote in the second, substantial deselection motion because they had not been in the party for more than six months.

The MP claims that this broke the rules and is threatening legal action against the Tory officials for breach of trust. If that fails, he says, he may stand as an independent Conservative.

Major-General Michael Steele, chairman of Reigate Tories, dismissed the threat. "I consider the vote to be entirely fair," he said after the deselection meeting. "I have worked with the legal department of Central Office throughout this process. There are no grounds on which to say that the vote was rigged."

The first defeat in the no-confidence motion was the key to Sir George's defeat in the second. Many of those members who might have supported him felt that to back him in the second motion would have left the party as divided as before. Many Tory activists are unhappy that the meeting had had to take place at all, regardless of the outcome. Jean Aslet, a local party member for the past six years, said: "It was a very sad evening. But we must stand by John Major. We have got an election coming up. We've got to get our act together. The party is divided but we have to band together very quickly — time is not on our side."

Those likely to put in for the constituency include Sir John Wheeler, the Northern Ireland Minister, and Winston Churchill, who will lose their seats of Westminster North and Davyhulme respectively as a result of boundary changes.

Major's poll claims do not fit the facts

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

JOHN MAJOR yesterday broke a cardinal rule of politicians: never claim that your secret opinion polls tell a better story than published polls unless you are prepared to back that with the facts.

Mr Major described as "complete rubbish" the MORI poll in *The Times* yesterday which put Labour 25 percentage points ahead. He claimed that the Tories' "tracking polls" had over the past four or five months "shown a very sharp difference" and were "a mile away from the MORI poll".

He provided no evidence for his assertions. Conservative Central Office staff later refused to disclose any details, claiming that they were private. This refusal is apparently against the spirit of the guidelines agreed by the Association of Professional Opinion Polling Organisations. This states that when details of private polls are leaked to the media, whether directly or through a third party, the polling firm will clarify and correct any misleading or incorrect impression. Tory officials deny any conflict.

ICM carry out polls for the Tories, as well as for *The Guardian*. The last two public ICM polls put the Labour lead at 17 to 19 per cent after the figures had been adjusted for the alleged reluctance of some Tory supporters to declare their views. It would be surprising if what the private Tory polls showed was different. The unadjusted leads are only a few points smaller than the MORI figures. Whichever basis is chosen, the implication of a huge Labour lead remains, contrary to Mr Major's claim.

Mr Major argued that, according to the MORI findings, Labour would have won the 1992 general election. Like all pollsters, MORI asks people how they voted in 1992. Some cannot remember, did not vote or were too young. This question has regularly shown that a sizeable proportion of Liberal Democrat supporters have forgotten their previous vote so they claim to have voted for whatever is *now* the leading opposition party. At present, this boosts the claimed Labour vote in 1992 and reduces the Liberal Democrat one. On the latest figures, it shows Tory and Labour roughly level-pegging in 1992, rather than Labour clearly winning the election. This does not necessarily mean that *current* levels of Labour support are over-stated, though some pollsters argue that an adjustment of three or four points should be made.

Nor does this phenomenon affect Conservative support, since the MORI question about 1992 voting is almost entirely accurate about the party's share then. There is no reason to doubt current polls pointing to a Tory share of about 30 per cent.

Mr Major was whistling in the wind. Worse, he was making precisely the mistake he himself criticises in others of selectively using polls when it suits him. The Tories should publish their own polls if they want to challenge other ones.

PETER RIDDELL

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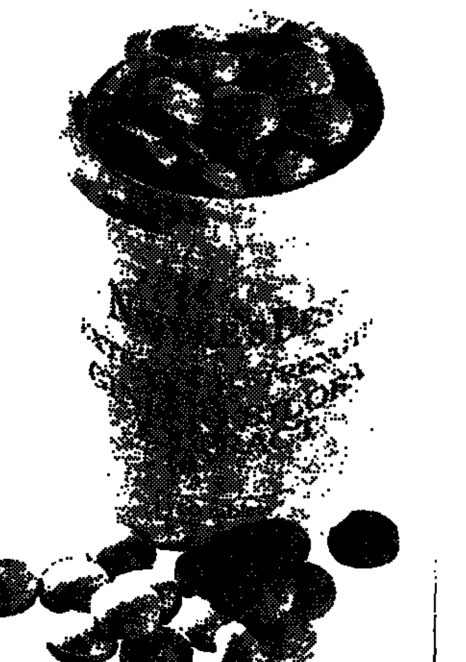

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Tory anger as sham speech proposes increased taxes and Marxist policies

Bishop puts radical words into the Queen's mouth

By Ruth Gledhill
RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

Sir Irvine Patnick is appalled by the bishop's *speech, which includes a quotation from Marx*

A BISHOP has written his own version of the next Queen's Speech, in which he quotes Karl Marx, condemns hospital understaffing and adds 5p to the basic rate of income tax. Tories have condemned the article, which one MP describes as "absolutely outrageous".

The Right Rev David Lunn, the Bishop of Sheffield, calls in his latest diocesan newsletter for his "dream Queen's Speech" to be placed on the nation's agenda. The first priority of his ministers, he says, would be "to bring an end to the scandalous waste of that resource that results from the massive unemployment of recent decades".

He condemns as false the theory that prosperity and employment will result from economic revival and says that new jobs do not lie in manufacturing but in hospitals, schools and public buildings. "There is an infinity of work waiting to be done."

Continuing his make-believe speech, the Church of England bishop says: "Many of my ministers are old enough to remember a time when it was unthinkable that in this country the homeless should be found sleeping in the streets. They are appalled that so quickly this intolerable scandal has become acceptable. In the next few days they will bring measures before you designed to end this unforgivable evil."

The bishop adds: "My ministers have sufficient confidence in the programme that they have set before you to quote Karl Marx: 'From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs'." He argues that an increase of 5p in income tax "will be widely welcomed as the price that has to be paid for full employment, good homes and good schools and hospitals".

Sir Irvine Patnick, Tory MP for Sheffield Hallam, said: "Rarely have I been so outraged by the leader of a religious denomination. He is supposed to be above political issues. Using a pretend Queen's Speech is absolutely outrageous. For a responsible cleric it is appalling."

Charles Hendry, a Conservative Party vice-chairman, said: "People will be shocked by these comments. They will be surprised at him quoting Karl Marx, given Marx's dismissive remarks about religion being the opium of the masses."

Bishop Lunn's spokesman, Canon Roy Arnold, said yesterday: "His imaginary Queen's Speech does enter the political fray but not particularly in favour of any one party. His views are his own but perhaps shared by many other thinking people in this country."

The article comes only days after the retiring Bishop of Liverpool, the Right Rev David Sheppard, appeared to blame government policies for unemployment.

At Your Service, Weekend, page 13

Bishop Lunn describes the plight of the homeless sleeping rough as an "unforgivable evil"

Credo

Candlemas lightens the way to God

Geoffrey Rowell

Pilgrimages and processions are deeply ingrained in our consciousness. They express in a visible way both the sense of the journey of life, and the quest for a goal which gives that journey meaning. Processions at weddings mark the beginning of a shared life. The funeral procession is a necessary taking of a mortal body to a place of burial or cremation, a bidding farewell, and a symbol of whatever journey may lie beyond the horizon of death.

Pilgrimages to shrines and temples have at their heart a coming to a numinous place of encounter with what Rudolf Otto called the *mysterium tremendum et fascinans* — the overwhelming and compelling mystery of the holy. In places of Christian devotion, such as Lourdes or Walsingham — and preeminently in Jerusalem, where pilgrims trace the Way of the Cross — processions are part of the ritual of pilgrimage. In Mecca, Muslim pilgrims circle the Kaaba.

In one way or another these ritual movements symbolise our journey into the presence of God. In a more secular context, marches and demonstrations, processing celebrating the return of a victorious team, journeys to visit literary shrines, and even the walking of long-distance footpaths, are instances of this same deep instinct.

Tomorrow, the Feast of Candlemas, was one of the great processional feasts of medieval England. The blessing of candles carried in procession when the light began to return after the winter darkness commemorated an earlier pilgrimage, recounted by St Luke in his Gospel when he tells of the journey of Mary and Joseph to Jerusalem to present the infant Jesus to God in the temple.

They brought the child to the holy place, to the place of presence and encounter with God. And there, in the temple, there is a moment of revelation for an old man, Simeon, who saw in the child the Messiah he had longed for, "a light to lighten the Gentiles and to be the glory of thy people Israel".

The ancient hymns and prayers of Candlemas dwell on the paradox of this child coming to the temple. He is brought to be presented to the Lord, yet He is Himself the incarnate Lord. "The old man carried the child, yet the child was the old man's God."

The prophet Malachi looked for God's coming to His temple with the purifying fire of judgment; yet He comes in the weakness of a child. Simeon speaks of Him as radiant with light and glory, yet that light and glory are hidden and concealed. And when the old man blesses Mary and Joseph, he speaks of a future suffering, of the sword that will pierce His mother's heart, for her son's passion will draw out all her com-passion. He will suffer and she will suffer with Him.

The Christ who reveals God to us, whose life displays His love, is the one who, in giving Himself to us, hides His glory, coming to us as a child. The same Christ invites us to see Him also in the anonymity of the poor and the needy, the hungry and homeless, and to know and express His love in serving their need.

It is not without reason that the Eastern Church calls this feast simply *Hypapante*, or meeting. At one level, it is a meeting between Simeon and Anna, two old and devout people, and Mary and Joseph, the mother and father bringing a child to the temple. At a deeper level, it is the meeting of those who look for God and long for His presence, meeting the God who is revealed in the humility of a child.

The end of Simeon's journey is a beginning as his eyes are opened to see and to know the God who comes among us, hidden in a child carried in His mother's arms, whose giving of Himself in love is Simeon's and our salvation, the light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Israel. For us to see with the eyes of Simeon calls for a like response of faith, which may be as fragile as a grain of mustard seed but which, like a grain of mustard seed, has the capacity to grow and to blossom.

☐ *The Right Rev Geoffrey Rowell is Bishop of Basingstoke*

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Letters link former Chirac aide to death camp convoy

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

ONE of President Chirac's former aides served under the French collaborationist Vichy regime and supervised the departure of a convoy of Jews destined for the Nazi gas chambers in 1942, a French news magazine claimed yesterday.

Michel Junot, 80, the former father-in-law of Princess Caroline of Monaco, worked between 1977 and 1995 as an adviser to M Chirac, then Mayor of Paris. His son Philippe married Princess Caroline of Monaco in 1978. They divorced in 1980.

As Vichy sub-prefect in the town of Pithiviers in the Loiret region south of Paris in 1942 and 1943, M Junot was responsible for security when a convoy of 1,000 Jews, including 163 under 18, was dispatched to a holding camp at Drancy on September 20, 1942. They were then deported to Auschwitz, *Le Point* magazine reported, citing newly discovered documents.

The magazine quoted letters from M Junot, then 25, to his superiors suggesting he had few moral qualms over his role in the deportations. "I have just been advised that a convoy of 1,000 Israelites will embark tomorrow," he allegedly wrote on the eve of the deportation, before noting that since almost all his available police would be needed to supervise the convoy he could not ensure security in the event of communist-inspired demonstrations on the day.

Junot: said he ran Resistance cell

The day after the Jews were sent to Drancy, he is said to have written: "I had been somewhat fearful as to the possibility of incidents which could have had repercussions on the orderliness of this departure. There were none, and good order continued to reign in the town."

M Junot was dismissed from office in December 1945, but allowed to continue his Civil Service career since he claimed to have been playing a double role, serving the Vichy regime but also working for the French Resistance. He went on to become a regional prefect, an MP for the CNI party, and finally a mayoral aide to M Chirac for 18 years, with responsibility for mediation. M Junot claimed that in 1942 he had no idea what would happen to the Jews deported from Pithiviers.

"We did not know the destination ... we only thought they were going to Drancy. We certainly did not think they were going on a nice holiday, but I didn't learn of the existence of the death camps until April 1945, when the first deportees returned," he told *Le Point*.

The Resistance movement in the Loiret region has denied any knowledge of M Junot or his claimed anti-Nazi activities, but he insisted this was because he had been involved in a network set up by a secret resistance cell, the Central Bureau of Information and Action (BCRA).

"We were absolutely forbidden to have any contact with Resistance movements on the ground, simply for reasons of compartmentalisation," he said. M Junot said he had set up a Resistance network for the BCRA with a Jewish friend, Jean-Claude Aaron.

The former Vichy official, who retired in the year of M Chirac's presidential election victory, said: "For a man or woman of 20 or 30, it is absolutely impossible to understand what daily life under the Occupation was like. Thus, it is very difficult to judge."

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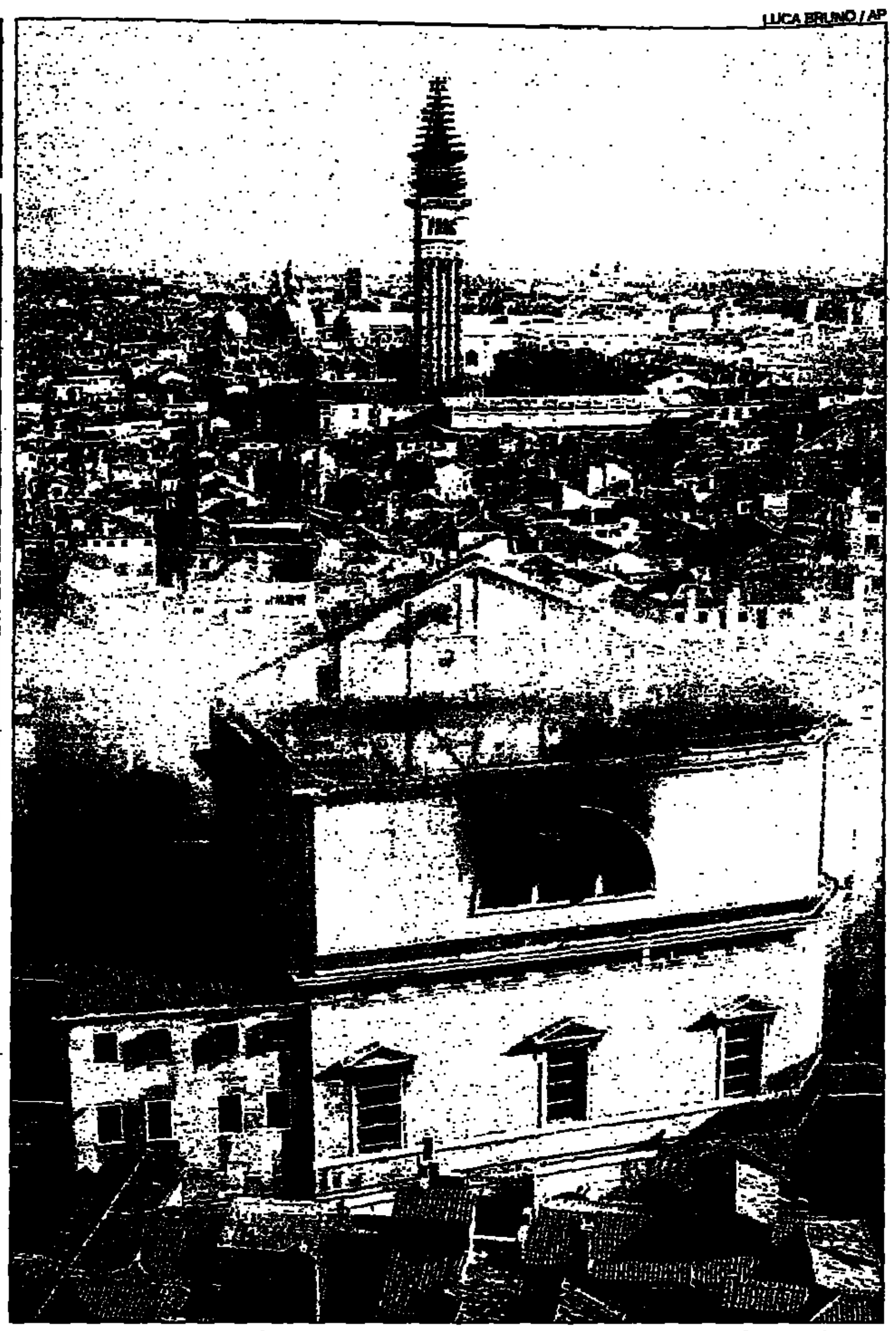

The burnt-out shell of La Fenice opera house in Venice on the day after the fire

Mafia-backed arson blamed for Venice disaster

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

A YEAR after the fire that devastated La Fenice opera house in Venice, the police evidence points to Mafia-backed arson.

Nobody has been arrested, however, and critics of the inquiry say the authorities are focusing on rebuilding the opera house rather than pursuing the culprits.

Venetians and opera lovers the world over watched aghast as firemen hosed down the smouldering ruin of the largely 18th-century opera house, whose breathtaking rococo interior had played host to opera composers and singers from Rossini to Pavarotti. A helicopter pilot, since decorated for his bravery, bombarded the inferno through the night with water scooped from the lagoon. However, most of the building was wrecked.

Investigators led by Felice Casson, the chief magistrate of Venice, identified suspicious circumstances: the night watchman was not on duty; the fire had been set near the roof by people who clearly knew the building well (and knew it was empty); canals nearby had been drained for cleaning and fire barges could not get close.

Local officials are still under investigation for negligence. However, the main theory, according to leaked versions of the preliminary inquiry, is that one of the building firms that had been carrying out renovation work (including anti-fire measures) was behind schedule and set fire to the theatre to avoid financial penalties amounting to £20,000. The firm has not been identified, but officials in Venice say the trail leads to building firms ultimately controlled by organised crime in the Naples area.

Massimo Cacciari, the left-wing Mayor, says he has "faith in Casson" but is impatient with the lack of specific accusations. "Saying La Fenice was burnt down by *Cosa Nostra* is about as useful as saying it was attacked by alien spacecraft," he told *Corriere della Sera*. A local lawyer said: "If all the firms in Italy which are behind schedule set fire to buildings, the entire country would be in ashes." Doubt has also been cast on the Mafia theory by Paolo Costa, who at the time of the fire was rector of Venice University and is now Minister of Public Works.

Gianfranco Bettin, the deputy mayor, believes that the "penalty clause" motive is plausible. "Some firms would be driven to the wall by even a small fine," he said.

Signor Cacciari has promisded to rebuild the theatre by 2000 "where it was and how it was", with the rococo decoration faithfully reproduced by Venetian craftsmen, but with 21st-century stage technology behind the scenes. However, reconstruction must start in June if the target is to be met and only half the £49 million needed has been raised.

Weekend, page 15

Dreyfus: found guilty on false spying charges

Computer date for Dreyfus collectors

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

THE world's first auction on the Internet, in which collectors can bid and pay for relics and documents relating to the Dreyfus affair on their computer screens, was announced yesterday by Drouot, the French auctioneer.

The "virtual auction", using computer technology to sell pictures, letters and other documents linked to the century-old scandal surrounding the treason trial and imprisonment of Alfred Dreyfus, is a prototype of the way auctions will be run in the 21st century, Jacques Binoche, the Drouot auctioneer, said.

The sale, on February 19, will take place simultaneously in auction rooms in Paris and on the Internet. Collectors on the other side of the globe will be able to bid for items as they come under the hammer, while two cameras will relay the action live on the computer network for bidders and thousands of "surfers".

In recent years art dealers have begun making increasing use of the Internet, but the Dreyfus auction is the first to offer a complete service to buyers, including catalogue browsing, pre-bidding, interactive bids while the sale is in progress, and credit card payment via computer screen, M Binoche said.

Dreyfus, a Jewish captain in the French Army, was found guilty on false spying charges in 1894, publicly humiliated to the delight of the anti-Semitic press, and imprisoned on Devil's Island penal colony in South America.

He was exonerated in 1906 after a sustained campaign to prove his innocence, most memorably by Emile Zola, the writer.

The affair, which split France and continues to provoke bitter debate, is reflected in the hundreds of items assembled over 30 years by Nicolas Philippe. His collection includes newspapers, posters and even cigarette cards.

Starting today and until midnight on February 18, collectors will be able to view the catalogue and register "prebids" using the Internet access code: http://www.nart.fr

Fatima's third secret revealed

BY TUNKU VARADARAJAN

IN WHAT could prove to be one of the great theological anticlimaxes of our time, a senior Portuguese scholar has ventured the thesis that the much-feared "third secret of Fátima" prophesied not the apocalyptic destruction of mankind but merely the end of Portugal's African empire.

Details of the theory, put forward by José Geraldes Freire, Professor of Literature at the University of Coimbra, were published yesterday.

The secret has been the subject of much apprehensive debate since it was entrusted, nearly eighty years ago, apparently by the Virgin Mary, to a little Portuguese shepherdess named Lucia. Lucia — now nearly 90 and a Carmelite nun for the past fifty years — was tending sheep at Fátima when, according to her testimony, "a Lady brighter than the sun" appeared before her and two young cousins.

The children saw the Virgin for the last time, on October 13, 1917, when 70,000 devotees flocked to Fátima, and ten-year-old Lucia was entrusted with three prophesies, which came to be referred to as the "secrets of Fátima". The first two, which predicted the Russian Revolution and the Second World War, were later disclosed by the shepherdess.

The third has been kept secret and is known only to the upper echelons of the Vatican.

After speaking to senior Vatican figures — many of whom hinted that the loss of Portugal's empire was at the core of the secret — Professor Geraldes Freire claims that he has enough information to be certain of his low-key thesis.

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Senators' protests threaten Clinton choice of CIA chief

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

ANTHONY LAKE, nominated by President Clinton to be the next head of the Central Intelligence Agency, is facing increasingly tough objections from senators in a row that threatens to give Mr Clinton his first setback in forming a new Cabinet.

The Senate this week delayed hearings into Mr Lake's suitability for the post, scheduled to begin on February 11, for at least two weeks until the Justice Department has concluded investigations into his personal share investments.

Senators, who have confirmed a rapid succession of Mr Clinton's nominees in the past 10 days, are now jibing at both Mr Lake and Alexis Herman, the nominee for Labour Secretary. Mr Clinton has taken pains to avoid controversy in his selections, after Senate objections savaged the nominations for his first Cabinet four years ago.

Senate Intelligence Committee members are now awaiting Mr Lake's response to four sets of questions. The Justice Department is scrutinising his delay in selling stocks in energy companies after he had been advised to do so by White House lawyers to avoid a conflict of interest. Mr Lake has also come under fire for his role, while Director of the National Security Council, in the tacit US approval of Iranian arms shipments to Bosnia in 1994. Congressional Republicans have criticised him sharply for not telling Congress or the CIA.

In the growing row over questionable contributions to the election campaign, he has been criticised for not using the security council to check the backgrounds of foreigners visiting the White House. In particular, the council has been criticised for letting the President meet a Chinese arms dealer last February.

The committee's final concern, which may prove the hardest to answer, is whether Mr Lake can transform himself from his previous role as a prominent political appointee to become the head of an agency that is responsible for gathering impartial information.

The White House is also battling to salvage the nomination of Ms Herman, after allegations that she was closely involved in other Democratic fundraising efforts, where potential donors from leading companies were allowed to meet government officials with influence over those industries.

Ms Herman says that she did not think the "coffees", as such meetings are called, were political.

First Lady defends her call for guest database

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

IN A new twist to Washington's growing feud over campaign financing, Hillary Clinton has admitted that she urged the installation of a computer database to keep track of White House guests, but was unaware it was used for political purposes.

The database dealt with people and events linked with the official work of the White House, the President's wife told reporters. She was forced on to the defensive as she was publicising her latest cause — reviving small firms in poor districts with "micro-loans".

The database held more than 200,000 names and enabled the Democratic National Committee to identify prospects for increased donations and to pamper major donors with invitations to state dinners, White House stays and other perks, according to interviews with Truman Arnold, the committee's former finance chairman. His comments imply that the database, which cost taxpayers $638,000 (£400,000), was illegally used for fundraising by the Democrats. The White House denied this yesterday.

ADRIAN BROOKS

Senior Superintendent Carl Williams of Jamaica's Narcotics Division with $60 million of marijuana found in a Miami-bound cargo container

Jamaica refuses to let in US drug hunters

FROM MICHAEL DYNES
IN KINGSTON

JAMAICA will not grant the United States the right to chase suspected drug traffickers into its territorial waters, despite an upsurge in the Caribbean drugs trade, Percival Patterson, the Prime Minister, has told *The Times*. While the Government is willing to co-operate in any programme to help make the Caribbean a drug-free zone, "we are not prepared to sacrifice our sovereignty in the process", he said.

Jamaica's authorities are also demanding the right to board US ships to search for illicit guns fuelling Kingston's gun-drug culture. Last year almost 1,000 people were killed with handguns smuggled in from America.

Mr Patterson's defiance comes before a fresh round of Washington-Kingston talks on how to stem a growing tide of cocaine and marijuana shipments to America from Latin America via the Caribbean. Jamaica is the only English-speaking Caribbean country that has refused to give American ships and planes the right of "hot pursuit".

Since the break-up of Colombian cocaine cartels there has been an increase in smaller-scale traffickers using the Caribbean. Large cocaine shipments in cargo vessels have declined, but small-scale ones in speedboats have grown. Caribbean drug runners are able to use more than 20 different territorial waters. US authorities feel many islands are unable to police their waters effectively, and are demanding the right to do the job. Countries that fail to comply face having US aid suspended.

Peter King, chairman of Jamaica's Export Security Council, insists the Government has introduced its own drug eradication programme. Last year, 6,700kg (6½ tons) of marijuana, 480kg of cocaine, 318kg of hash oil, and 96kg of hashish were seized. Last month, Jamaican police found 26,000lb of marijuana, destined for America and worth about $60 million (£37 million). An estimated 100,000 Jamaicans grow marijuana on a small scale, and about 80 per cent of the male population are regular consumers (women rarely smoke). But it is the rapid growth of the violent cocaine trade that really concerns the authorities.

New legislation has given them the right to seize the assets of drug traffickers, and impose maximum 35-year jail sentences and unlimited fines.

Last year 263 Jamaicans and 339 foreigners were arrested on drugs charges, Mr King said. "Many tourists think that because they are in the land of Bob Marley they should smoke some ganja. But if you come to Jamaica to smoke ganja you are going to jail. You are not welcome here."

Golden sprinter in £7m deal

FROM QUENTIN LETTS
IN NEW YORK

THE American sprinter Michael Johnson, who won gold medals for both 200m and 400m at last summer's Olympic Games, has signed a $12 million (£7.4 million) endorsement deal with a sports-shoe manufacturer.

His six-year agreement with Nike, announced yesterday, will include "performance initiatives" — marketing executive speak for further riches if he wins races. Johnson, whose stiff, "running waiter" sprinting style and gold-coloured track shoes made him one of the most popular figures at Atlanta, is a dollar multimillionaire. Last year he made $3 million.

The Nike deal is confirmation that modern athletics is a big bucks business, offering its stars more than mere gold medals. In the Fifties the most a successful runner could expect by way of reward was an orange to suck on and a handshake from a retired brigadier. Now the fleet of foot can collect fast cars, corporate jets, a house in Beverly Hills and a streetwise agent.

Johnson's manager, Brad Hunt, has helped to organise a lucrative sporting event for his client this summer when Johnson will square up against his Canadian rival, Donovan Bailey, the 100m world record holder. Each will receive $500,000 for showing up and the winner will take $1 million.

Johnson: promised further riches if he wins races

Colombia hails cocaine raid

BY GABRIELLA GAMINI
SOUTH AMERICA
CORRESPONDENT

COLOMBIAN anti-narcotics police yesterday incinerated the biggest cocaine production laboratory to have been detected in the country's 30-year drugs war.

Seven tons of pure cocaine and 300kg (660lb) of coca paste — the result of a first stage of processing — were also confiscated during the police raid that began on Thursday and was hailed as the "biggest blow to drug production ever".

Police came across the illicit laboratory, equipped to produce 1.5 tons of cocaine a day, in the southern Guaviare jungle, where 80 per cent of the world's cocaine is produced.

"This is our most spectacular victory against drug producers. It will serve as a sign that the Colombian Government takes its anti-drugs war seriously," said General Rosso José Serrano, the chief of the anti-drugs police. The raid has come just in time for President Samper, whose anti-drugs war effort will be evaluated next month by the United States before more aid is allocated. Police used 50 special troops, eight helicopters, an aircraft and several speed boats in the raid.

Police said the laboratory belonged to the Cartel de los Llanos (The Plains Cartel), a new group of drug barons which appears to have taken over from the Cali cartel.

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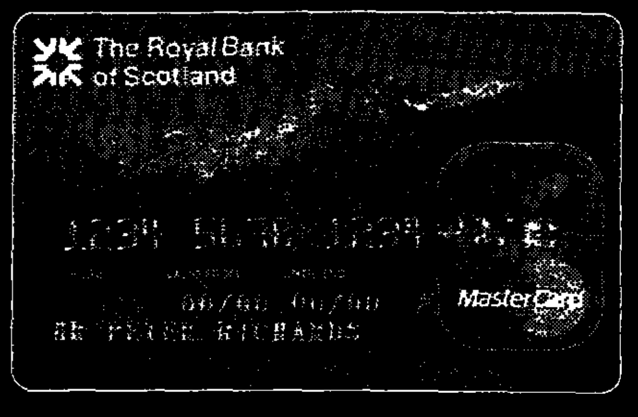

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ANC men 'linked to the murder of Communist Hani'

FROM INIGO GILMORE IN JOHANNESBURG

SOUTH AFRICA'S ruling African National Congress said yesterday it regarded as "serious" allegations that an unidentified group of ANC operatives had a hand in the 1993 assassination of Chris Hani, one of the party's most popular leaders.

The allegations, which arose after new disclosures about the circumstances surrounding his death, coincided with the publication of details of an explosive report implicating the serving head of the South African military and British special forces in "third force" violence that threatened to undermine the country's transition to majority rule. The new allegations will be investigated by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

The alleged involvement of British SAS "advisers" was rejected by Foreign Office sources in London last night. Substantial military contacts between Britain and South Africa were renewed only after the election of the new national Government in 1994.

There is now a British military advisory and training team in South Africa helping to merge the old South African Defence Force with the "non-statutory" forces such as the ANC military wing. However, it is possible that former members of the SAS, some of whom were recruited from Rhodesia, could have been employed unofficially to give training before 1994.

A one-time girlfriend of an apartheid-era military intelligence agent has claimed she typed documents which showed that the authorities and some ANC security personnel had knowledge of the plot to kill Hani. The charismatic leader of the South African Communist Party, Hani was said by the agent to have been seen as a threat to both sides. Winnie Mandela was reported after the assassination to have told confidants she believed that moderate ANC leaders had conspired with the National Party Government to eliminate Hani.

The revelations are said to reopen the book on one of South Africa's most emotional chapters when Clive Derby-Lewis, a Conservative Party politician, and Janusz Waluz, a Polish immigrant, were sentenced to death for the April 10, 1993, murder. Both have applied for amnesty from the commission, which may now look more closely at forces other than the group of right-wingers that wanted Hani dead.

The commission is also to investigate allegations contained in the Steyn report based on the findings of an inquiry ordered by the former President, F. W. de Klerk, into revolutionary activities of elements of the South African security forces in the final years of white rule. The investigation, conducted by General Pierre Steyn, who in 1992 commanded all intelligence functions of the armed forces, was handed to Nelson Mandela before his accession to the presidency in 1994. When the ANC won elections, Mr Mandela refused to release the report because he considered its contents explosive. Recently he gave a copy to Archbishop Desmond Tutu's truth commission.

A leaked copy of a summary drawn up by commission officials was published in a Johannesburg newspaper yesterday showing how the country nearly lost control of the military and police in the run-up to democratic elections. It confirms the involvement of commando units in random violence, and gives details about hit squads and the supply of arms and training to the Inkatha Freedom Party. General George Meiring, the present chief of the defence force, is implicated by the report.

General Steyn, now Secretary of Defence, does not say whether the SAS contact was official.

President Mandela with his rival, Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, the Inkatha leader, whom he appointed yesterday as South Africa's acting President. Chief Buthelezi will fill the post from tomorrow to Tuesday while President Mandela and Thabo Mbeki, the Deputy President, are attending a meeting of the World Economic Forum in Switzerland (Inigo Gilmore writes).

Buthelezi given power

A delighted Chief Buthelezi, who is also Home Affairs Minister, thanked the President for his trust and said: "I pray that nothing happens in the few hours during which I will be holding such a responsibility to show that I did not deserve that trust. I told President Mandela that the prospect of acting in that capacity ... filled me with awe."

With the National Party no longer in the Government of National Unity, Inkatha is the only party besides the African National Congress with Cabinet positions.

Jealous wife cut husband to pieces

FROM QUENTIN LETTS
IN NEW YORK

A FORMER Soviet dissident whose American dream went horribly wrong was convicted of killing her husband with an axe and chopping up his body into small pieces which were then thrown into New Jersey's Passaic River.

Rita Gluzman, 48, faces life in jail for taking part, with a cousin, in the killing of Yakov Gluzman, 49, a leading cancer research scientist. She became jealous after her husband took up with another woman.

The Gluzmans emigrated from the Soviet Union, where in 1971 she went on hunger strike to secure permission for her husband to leave the country. On reaching the West, the couple found a taste for material riches; she bought mink coats, BMW cars and the latest electronic equipment. When he sought a divorce, she feared that her wealth was in danger and began spying on him.

A technicality meant she was tried not for murder but for "spouse abuse".

Mohajirs' support grows before poll

FROM ZAHID HUSSAIN IN KARACHI

FORMER rebels, who engaged in a fierce conflict with the deposed Bhutto Government in Pakistan's financial capital of Karachi for more than three years, may hold the balance of power in the future national assembly.

The Mohajir Quami Movement, a nationalist organisation of Urdu-speaking Mohajirs (migrants), has emerged as a political force in Monday's parliamentary polls. Most opinion polls indicate that the group, which has been fighting for more political rights for Mohajirs, is likely to emerge as the third-largest group in the national assembly after the Pakistan Muslim League and Pakistan Peoples' Party.

It is also likely to form a coalition government in the province of Sindh. Mohajirs, migrants from India after partition, constitute more than 60 per cent of the population in Karachi and other cities in the province.

Led by Altaf Hussain, 43, who lives in self-imposed exile in London, the MQM appears to have regained total political control of Pakistan's biggest city and other urban areas of Sindh province.

Thousands listen to their leader's telephoned speech from London every evening in middle and lower-class districts of Karachi. Life-size portraits of Mr Hussain adorn the movement's strongholds. Hundreds of supporters and members of their families who were forced into hiding to escape prosecution are back in the city.

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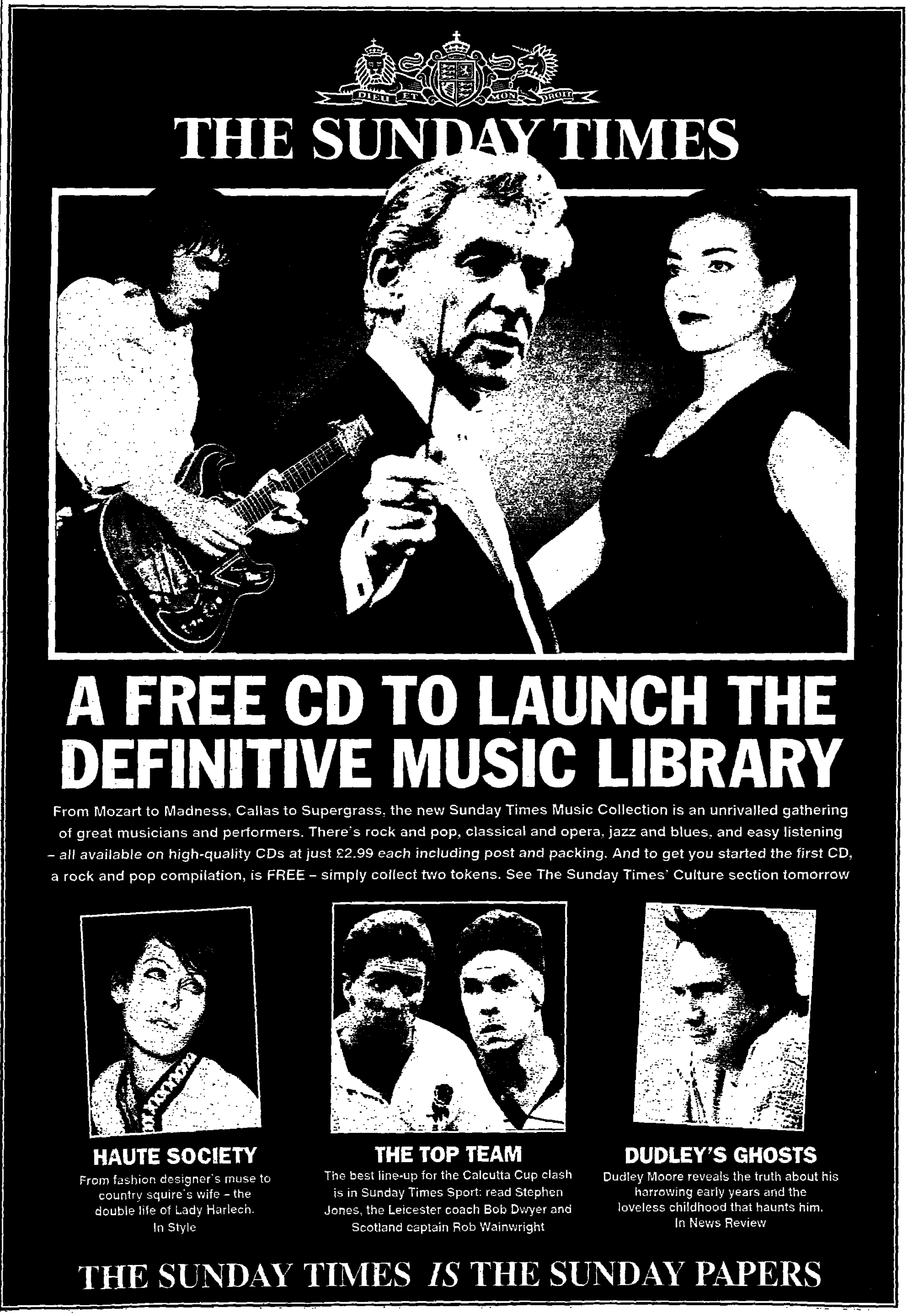

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Search for jungle wife condemned by Amazon experts

FROM GABRIELLA GAMINI IN RIO DE JANEIRO

BRAZILIAN anthropologists have condemned an American scientist's jungle expedition to search for his Yanomami Indian wife who escaped from a life in the West. They say that it is "detrimental" to years of work aimed at preserving Amazonian tribes.

"The Yanomami woman turned her back on Western civilisation so she wants to be left alone to live with her tribe," said Carlo Zacquini, the co-ordinator of the Pro-Yanomami Commission, which has been working with the Indians since 1978.

"Efforts to integrate a Yanomami Indian into Western life can only be detrimental," said Julio Geiger, the president of Brazil's official body for protecting Indian groups. "It goes against all anthropological studies which show that these Indians should be allowed to preserve their own ways."

The expedition was launched from Brazil's northern Roraima state last week by Kenneth Good, an American anthropologist, who wants to persuade his Yanomami wife, Yarima, to return to the United States to see their three children.

"She ran away, back to her natural habitat, after miserable years where she could not adapt to a comfortable all-mod-cons life and preferred to run naked in the jungle and suck on honey cones," said Senhor Zacquini. "Like any woman, she may feel the need to see her children again, but it would be cruel to try to take her back." Mrs Good failed to adapt to the Western lifestyle when Mr Good took her to live in the New Jersey suburb of Rutherford in 1988.

She "slipped back" into the jungle during the filming of a television documentary in the Venezuelan Amazon in 1993 and has apparently returned to a traditional life with her tribespeople, remarried and had another child.

Mr Good, who wrote about his Amazonian romance in a book called *Amazon Love Story*, married her in a tribal ceremony when she was a child. He had gone into the jungle region along the border between Brazil and Venezuela which is inhabited by the Yanomami more than 20 years ago.

Although he was sent out to undertake a six-month project to research protein intake by the Indians, he remained in the Amazon for 11 years.

In his book, he describes how he built an oval *oca* (a straw hut) in the middle of a traditional village and how his cotton hammock was the envy of the Indians, who sleep in hammocks made from rough plant fibre.

Yarima was sent by her parents to prepare his food every day and eventually a romance blossomed.

His marriage to the girl, regarded as normal by the Indians, who are polygamous, was criticised by anthropologists as "unethical". His attempt to make her fit into suburban life in the United States was the target of even more condemnation.

Yarima permed her hair into an afro style and dressed her children — she had two in the jungle and one in the United States — in trainers and sweatshirts. She never became fluent in English and lived an isolated existence watched like a "monkey in a cage" by curious neighbours.

"Like any mother she probably yearns for her children and would want to see them," said Senhor Zacquini. Yanomami women, however, consider men responsible for bringing up their children.

JEFF CHRISTENSEN / REUTER

Riddick Bowe, saying he needs discipline and a new challenge, shows off his US Marine Corps papers

Boxer Bowe signs up to fight flab

FROM IAN BRODIE
IN WASHINGTON

RIDDICK BOWE, the former world heavyweight boxing champion, has taken a rather extreme step to get in better shape. He has enlisted as a private in the United States Marine Corps reserves.

That means three months of dreaded boot camp, up at 4.30am, drill sergeants in stiff-brimmed hats screaming insults in his face all day long, lots of spit-and-polish, and lights out by 10.30pm.

"I'm going into the Marine Corps to be a killer," said Mr Bowe, 29, who has reaped more than $100 million (£62 million) from his winnings, endorsements and investments during an eight-year professional career. He also has a wife, five children and maybe too comfortable a life between fights. He wants to do something about his weight, which ballooned to 18 stone before a fight seven months ago. He admitted: "I need another challenge now, to have discipline."

In the hope of dissuading him from signing up, Mr Bowe's manager, Rock Newman, took him to the boot camp on Parris Island, South Carolina, to show him the rigours of training. Mr Bowe was awed but not deterred. He said: "I was kind of numb. I saw a guy getting this close" — he put his hand an inch from his nose — "spitting in his face". Boot camp ends with an exercise known as "The Crucible", in which recruits are deprived of food and sleep for 54 hours, engage in mock battles and are force-marched 40 miles across country carrying a 53lb pack. After that, Mr Bowe will undergo more combat training before joining the reserves in Washington, his home town. If war breaks out, he could be called up. "If I gotta die defending my country, what a way to die," he said.

Mr Bowe boasted he was already able to perform the push-ups and pull-ups required by the Marines, but confessed to being afraid of heights. "I ain't jumping out of no planes," he said.

Marine outrage over 'blood pinnings'

A Marine screams as a spiked medal is pushed into his chest

Washington: Horrifying videotapes of spiked medals being pounded into the chests of young paratroopers during an illegal initiation rite were shown on American television yesterday (Ian Brodie writes).

The US Marine Corps said it had opened an inquiry into the "blood pinnings". General Charles Krulak, the commandant said he was committed to ridding the corps of such "heinous" behaviour.

The episodes in 1991 and 1993 were videotaped by participants and obtained by NBC and CNN. They showed Marines writhing in pain as the points of their newly-won parachute wings were punched into their chests.

The ritual, known as hazing, marked the victims' completion of ten jumps and their readiness for parachute duty. What made the scenes so sickening was the way the perpetrators kept beating the pins into the chests, even rotating them to make the pain more excruciating.

Nine of the 35 people identified in the 1991 episode are still on duty and could face courts martial or dishonourable discharge.

WORLD IN BRIEF

US bomb suspect filmed near van

Los Angeles: Timothy McVeigh, the chief suspect in the Oklahoma City bombing, was caught on video buying a hamburger yards from where a van used to transport the bomb was hired, sources have revealed.

The apparent breakthrough in the FBI investigation came when detectives spotted Mr McVeigh in footage from a McDonald's security camera, but the news was overshadowed by a damning report on the FBI crime laboratory in Washington, where a whistleblower has claimed sloppy work could jeopardize the inquiry.

So far witnesses have failed to agree on whether the suspect was at the garage in Junction City, Kansas, where the van was hired. The explosion outside the Alfred P. Murrah building in Oklahoma City two years ago killed 168 people.

Liberians give up weapons

Monrovia: Liberia's militiamen, who have held the shattered nation hostage during seven years of civil war, joined a last-minute rush to disarm in time for yesterday's deadline before elections due to be held in May. However, it looked doubtful that all would hand in their weapons on time. With estimates of the number of fighters ranging up to 60,000, fewer than 16,000 had disarmed by Thursday. United Nations monitors said that 15,519 gunmen had disarmed since the exercise began in November, including 3,397 child soldiers and 1,028 women fighters. The monitors said fighters had clamoured to give up their arms at 13 centres. *(Reuter)*

140-rape suspect charged

Madrid: Spanish police have charged a man named as Arlindo Luis C.C., 31, with raping 140 women over an eight-year period (Tunku Varadarajan writes). The man is alleged to have stalked the streets of Pirámides, a working-class district of the Spanish capital, since 1988. His wife, unaware of his alleged crimes, was reported to be in serious shock. The man is said to have blamed his actions on ill treatment he had received from "snobbish girls in my class at high school who treated me like a bumpkin". When detained by the police this week, he said: "I am surprised it took you so long."

Banda faces £5.5m charge

Blantyre: Malawi's former "President for life", Dr Hastings Banda, who ruled the country with an iron fist for three decades until 1994, was charged with fraud involving more than £5.5 million. Dr Banda, who is believed to be 96, did not appear in court because of old age and ill-health. The case against him and three others will be heard in the High Court on a date to be set. Hundreds of supporters from his main opposition Malawi Congress Party demonstrated outside the heavily guarded court building. *(Reuter)*

West told to halt Hutu aid

Geneva: Officials in east Zaire have told Western agencies to suspend aid for 160,000 Rwandan Hutu refugees encamped near fighting between rebels and Zairean troops, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees said. The agency's staff will meet officials in the Lubutu area to try to clarify the situation, Pamela O'Toole, an agency official, said here. "The refugees are in desperate need. Restrictions could cause tremendous problems." *(Reuter)*

Polio risk to be halved

Atlanta: A vaccine using drops on sugar cubes caused almost every case of polio in the United States between 1980 and 1994, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said. Of 133 people who contracted polio, the oral vaccine was to blame for 125 cases. A new regimen involving preliminary injections begins this month and is expected to halve the risk — now one case for every 2.4 million doses. *(AP)*

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Ailing elite keeps faith with Dzhuna's spiritual remedies as state health system nears collapse

Mystic offers healing touch to friend Boris

MOSCOW FILE

by RICHARD BEESTON

AS President Yeltsin celebrates his 66th birthday today, facing a bleak future dogged by constant health problems, one woman with special healing powers may offer his last chance to make a full recovery and reclaim his empty throne.

In a dingy clinic in central Moscow, Dzhuna, a dark-haired spiritual healer who favours ankle-length fur coats and military uniforms, is convinced that powers she once used to help past Kremlin leaders could restore the President to full health.

"When I last saw Yeltsin at his inauguration ceremony, I told him I was there to help him any time," she said. "I could certainly be of great use now. His health is a matter of utmost importance to the future of this country."

While sceptics may dismiss her healing abilities as quack medicine, her credibility among Russians, particularly the elite, is rock solid and her waiting room is packed every evening with those seeking relief through the alleged powers of her hands. In a country where the state healthcare system has virtually collapsed, alternative medicine, ranging from herbal cures to witchcraft, has become more and more popular.

Dzhuna, who was made famous throughout the former Soviet Union by her televised seances, was so admired by Kremlin doctors that she was asked to treat Leonid Brezhnev, the former Soviet leader, who remained at his job far longer than anyone had expected.

To prove her connections in high places, the walls of her office are decorated with scores of photographs showing her posing beside Mr Yeltsin and his family.

Judging by the display, she also seemed particularly popular with the Russian military, who have awarded her the rank of general and even given her a ceremonial uniform. In some photographs she is seen inspecting troops with General Pavel Grachev, the former Defence Minister, and in another dancing a waltz with General Igor Rodionov, the present Defence Minister.

However, she complained bitterly that the present advisers around Mr Yeltsin were deliberately keeping her away from the President. "This country needs Boris Nikolayevich [Yeltsin] like the body needs oxygen and it is my duty to help," she said. "I believe that his family are in favour of me assisting, but those around him have conspired to stop me."

While Kremlin doctors fret over how best to get the Russian leader back to full strength after nearly eight months' absence, the authorities may conclude that it may not hurt at least to let her try her skills on the ailing leader.

Leading article, page 23

Dzhuna, the healer who says she can help President Yeltsin, meets him at the Kremlin

Bugged by a sound bite

MICHAEL HOWARD'S assertion this week that the spying war between Britain and Russia is "behind us" may be put to the test sooner than he thought.

Behind the smiles of British and Russian officials attending the laying of the foundation stone of the new British Embassy in Moscow on Thursday were the very real security concerns about the building's construction. The site is only a few hundred yards from the bug-ridden American Embassy building, which was completed in 1985 but never used.

It was so riddled with KGB listening devices that it became known as "a state-of-the-art, eight-storey microphone".

Premier's bear hunt chills rivals

WITH President Yeltsin removed from daily life, the spotlight has turned on Viktor Chernomyrdin, his loyal and avuncular Prime Minister, who until recently was widely regarded as too soft-hearted for Kremlin politics.

It may be time for a reappraisal after an incident which showed that the tubby Prime Minister can be just as ruthless and bloodthirsty as the other candidates vying for the leadership. The details emerged after a hunting trip on January 12 near Yaroslavl, north of Moscow, where Mr Chernomyrdin shot dead a mother bear and its two cubs, which were awakened from hibernation by a pack of hunting dogs.

Even in Russia, where the public is much less sensitive about blood sports than in the West, the account of the hunt has caused outrage and sent a chill down the spine of Mr Chernomyrdin's opponents.

The sleeping bears were discovered by a park ranger, who was told that someone important from Moscow would be coming to shoot them. A makeshift road was built, armed guards surrounded the unfortunate animals and Mr Chernomyrdin duly drove up and shot his drowsy prey.

A Cyprus museum specialist cleans one of the sphinxes

Ancient sphinxes found in Cyprus

FROM REUTER IN NICOSIA

ARCHAEOLOGISTS on Cyprus yesterday unearthed several immaculately preserved statues of lions and sphinxes which they said dated from the 6th century BC.

"Our team was working on maintaining the wall of a royal tomb there this morning and they found two lions, over life-sized, and a sphinx in immaculate condition," Demos Christou, the director of the Cyprus Antiquities Department, said. "They were made around the 6th century BC ... of limestone."

The finds are at Tamassos, site of an ancient kingdom with copper smelting workshops about 12 miles southwest of the capital, Nicosia. The lions are in a crouching position with their teeth bared. One is missing an ear, while the other was found in three pieces. The sphinx was found intact. Museum officials said two more statues of lions and another sphinx were found later yesterday.

Mr Christou said the sphinxes were identical to those found in Egypt and noted that Cyprus was under Egyptian rule during the period concerned.

Tamassos, a settlement believed to date from about 1200 BC, was one of 11 to 13 ancient inland kingdoms in Cyprus. They were replaced in the 3rd century BC by the Cypriot Commune, until the 7th century AD. "This find is additional evidence that the site was very, very important," Mr Christou said.

Russia to host twin festival

Moscow: Russia will play host to more than 4,000 sets of twins from nine countries at a six-day festival in March, Tass said yesterday.

Marina Parusnikova, the organiser, said the aim was "to try to penetrate the difficult spiritual world of twins and demonstrate their psychological peculiarities". Russia has two million of the world's estimated 60 million twins.

Events will include two "mirror-image" football matches, with twins divided into separate teams and playing in corresponding positions. Prizes will be awarded for achievements in science, culture and business. (AFP)

Chirac visit to bolster Yeltsin

FROM ROBIN LODGE IN MOSCOW

THE Kremlin was last night putting the finishing touches to preparations for President Yeltsin's planned meeting tomorrow with President Chirac of France, the main aim of which is to persuade the public at home and abroad that the Russian leader is well on the way back to full health.

Mr Yeltsin's talks with M Chirac follow two appearances at the Kremlin this week, heavily edited clips of which have been shown on television. The President has lost weight and regained colour, but is still clearly weak.

Presidential aides are leaving nothing to chance. Journalists hoping to cover the talks have been denied access to the meeting. Officials declined to reveal where the talks would take place, saying only that they would be held in one of the official Kremlin residences. M Chirac will go to the talks straight from the airport and return home directly afterwards.

The officials refused to give any details about the duration or the agenda of the talks. "It will be on the lines of the Kohl visit," a spokesman said, referring to the brief visit early last monthby the German Chancellor, who held three hours of talks with Mr Yeltsin at his hunting lodge northwest of Moscow, just before the Russian leader's latest admission to hospital with pneumonia. Since his re-election last July, Mr Yeltsin has spent more time in hospital than at his desk and little has been seen of him since he was discharged from hospital on January 20.

Like Herr Kohl, M Chirac is a strong supporter of Mr Yeltsin, and one of the main aims of the visit will be to reassure himself over the Russian President's health, as well as to help to bolster confidence in him in the West. Their talks are expected to concentrate on Russian objections to Nato's enlargement plans, a topic certain to dominate foreign policy for the next six months.

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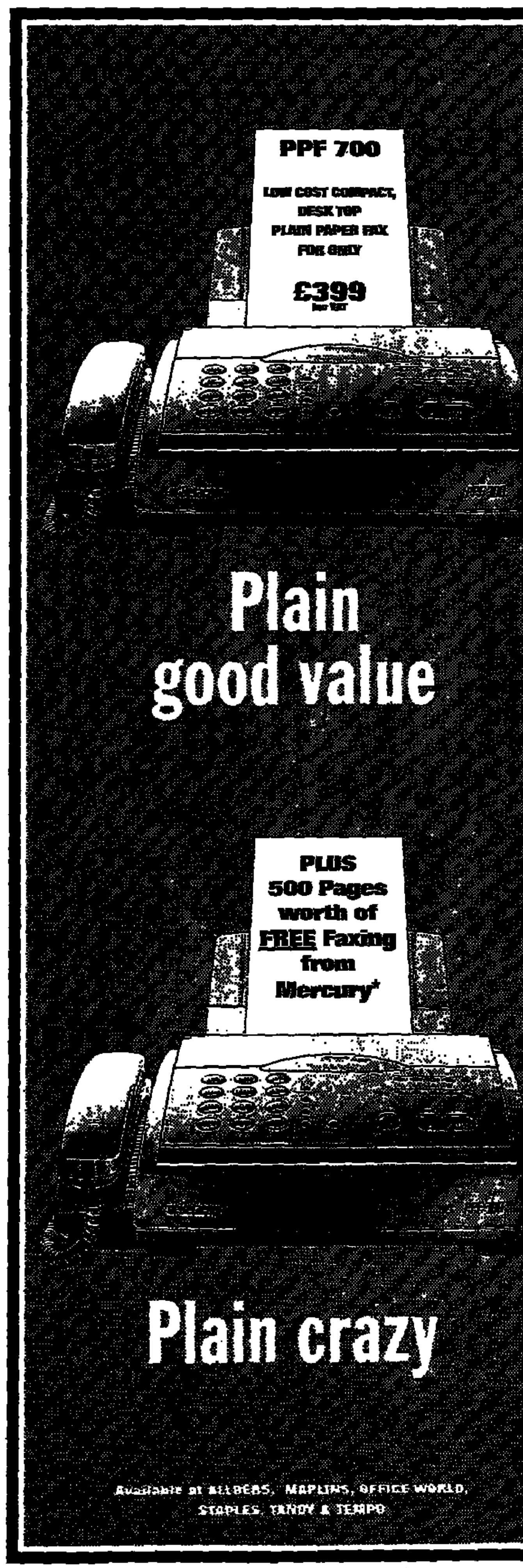
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■ THEATRE 1

Timothy and Samuel West take the central roles in an epic staging of *Henry IV Parts I and 2*

■ THEATRE 2

. . . while in Manchester Contact Theatre revives Harold Pinter's classic *The Birthday Party*

THE TIMES ARTS

■ ON MONDAY

After 50 years on stage and screen, Jeanne Moreau takes stock of her achievement

■ ON MONDAY

Where does Channel 4 go after Michael Grade? Melvyn Bragg considers the options

No room for seconds

THEATRE

Henry IV Parts I and 2
Old Vic

After its three-month march around Britain, English Touring Theatre arrives, like a medieval army, at London, and the experience of seeing both parts of *Henry IV* in a single day is too much like watching six hours of a pageant moving grandly past.

Although the high points become gathered into a whole, there is, as in any procession, a repetition of effect. Another rebellion, another pleading woman, another jape upon Falstaff, another resolve to behave better in future. Take the plays on separate evenings is my advice.

The extra charge to these two plays, lifting their quality beyond the relative simplicities of historical drama, lies in their exploration of father-son relationships. Young Hal's own father is rancorous and reproachful; the fat knight offers an awkwardly wrong alternative, where the older man is also of lesser rank; and the Lord Chief Justice, although never likely to be affectionate, stands as a pattern for sobriety and doing good.

Stephen Unwin's production adds the further dimension of an off-stage father and son playing Falstaff and his surrogate offspring, Hal. Interestingly, for most of the time it is easy to forget the family relationship between Timothy and Samuel West. The two men are physically so unalike that generally it is only at the moments of such physical contact as the joyful belly-bouncing at Eastcheap that reminders of their kinship appear.

When Falstaff is abused for his grossness — which he is, by everyone, throughout both plays — Timothy West counters by seeming to pay no heed to the insults. He is aware of his bulk, and amusingly has to rock himself backwards and forwards before launching himself off a sofa, but there is a sense that if he acknowledges what his belly has acquired he will be reminded of what his heart has lost. In the evening scenes set in Justice Shallow's Gloucestershire estate he at last becomes painfully aware of what is absent from his life. While Silence sings his absurdly melancholy welcome, West sits slumped in genuine melancholy.

Prince Hal is a chilly fish, and Samuel West's demeanour shows that he takes in the mucky morals of the Eastcheap crew and is not taken in. It is in the restraints of Shakespeare's writing that he can never be shown thieving or whoring, only consorting with those who do. Yet West gives Hal so discriminating an air that it can be hard to imagine him revelling until those moments when, with a gurgle of joy, he abruptly doffs the divinity that hedges him.

The integrating aspect of his split personality appears in the scenes with Gary Waldhorn's old King, where he speaks with moving precision, especially at the bedside after trying on the crown. Here he presents the apologies and arguments of the verse as though the words are coming new-minted to his mind.

Pamela Howard's scenic design is well suited to a touring production, where the panelled walls look solid but undoubtedly weigh nothing, and swing open to reveal orchard or seashore. There is a vigorous Hotspur from Paterson Joseph, although he starts one speech on too high a pitch to take him through to its climax. I did not care for his Pistol, nor the last, raucous Eastcheap scenes. Paul Imbusch and Ian Flintoff are admirable as fruity Archbishop and the resolute Lord Chief Justice, and Joseph O'Conor's Shallow, toothily inventing past misdeeds, provides endearing comedy.

JEREMY KINGSTON

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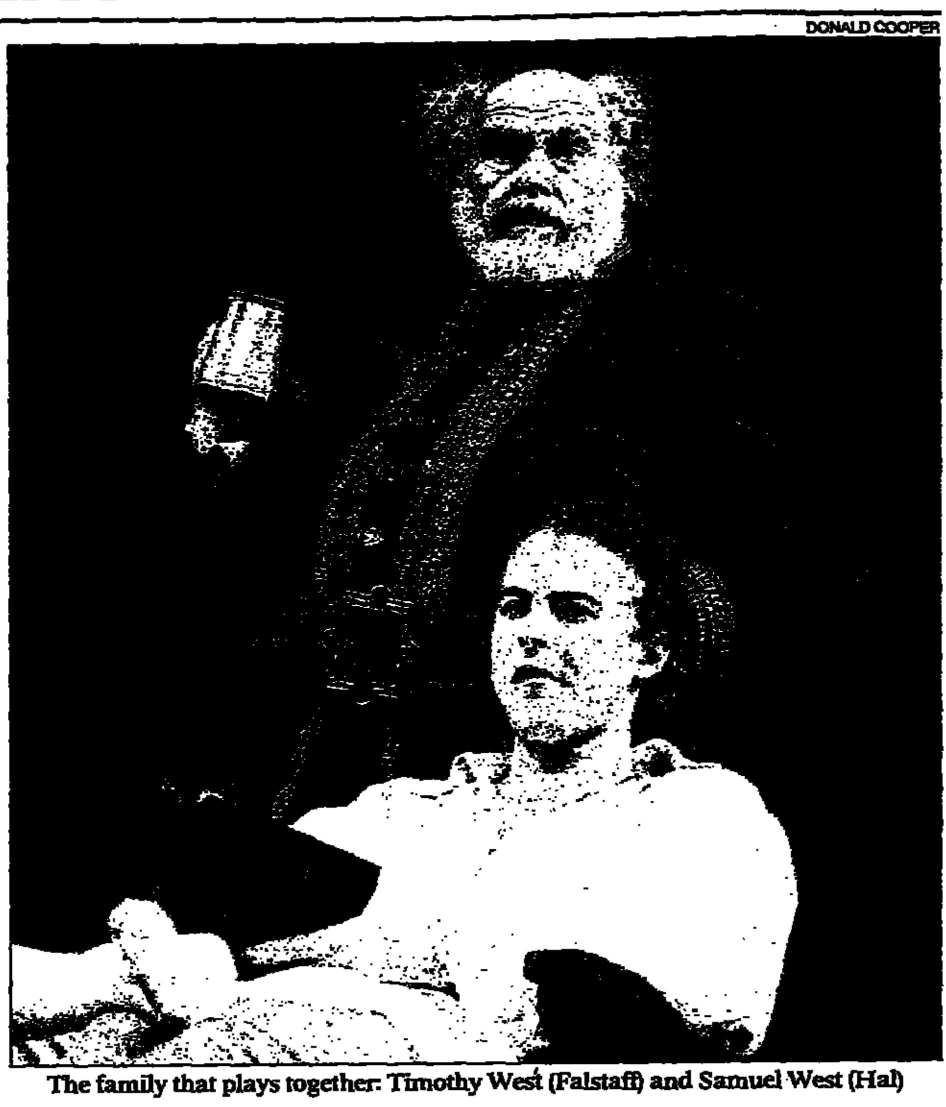

The family that plays together: Timothy West (Falstaff) and Samuel West (Hal)

The evil lives on

The Birthday Party
Manchester

WHEN Harold Pinter launched his first major play, *The Birthday Party*, in 1958, the critics rammed it and the production sank like a lead balloon. Now it is hailed as one of the keystones of modern drama, and squats at one end of Pinter's career like some inscrutable monolith donated to us by beings from outer space. To the connoisseur, what it means is far less interesting than what it *might* mean. In short, it's a play for committed speculators who, if they weren't directing Pinter's texts, would undoubtedly be compiling fiendish crossword clues.

This is a little unfair on Andy Farrell, whose production at the Dancehouse for Contact Theatre Company is faithful to Pinter's script without overcooking the reverence. There's a lovely dilapidated atmosphere about Simon Banham's seaside boarding house, where the elderly proprietors, Meg and Petey, indulge their tenant, Stanley. Ducks fly up the walls and piles of old newspaper moulder under the sideboard. A sense that dull lives are up for examination is cleverly suggested by a convex mirror that peers into the stage like a giant spyhole. Details like this score points with conspiracy theorists.

Even the breakfast routine becomes a high art form. Wearing a tatty dressing gown and thick glasses, Rupert Holliday Evans's disgruntled Stanley sits between Petey and Meg while they surreally plough through ritual banalities. An argument over a cup of tea makes you acutely aware of a sexual frisson between Doreen Mantle's Meg and the reclusive Stanley. As emotional co-ordinates change, certainties crumble.

Disorientation sets in with the arrival of two strangers with sinister intentions. Malcolm Hebden's Goldberg spends too much time carefully fluffing his accent, while his unstable sidekick, McCann (Kieran Cunningham), puts the frighteners on Stanley, forcing him to celebrate a birthday he didn't know he had. Their overly calculated menace gives you the sensation of running through treacle.

The performances, however, deserve scrutiny. Mantle is a wonderful mix of supermarket anxiety and cosy cheer. John Jardine's amiable Petey is tantalisingly reachable behind his newspaper. And Evans charts Stanley's spooky disintegration with the intensity of a cornered fugitive.

JAMES CHRISTOPHER

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Our new *Eat out for £5 Restaurant Guide 1997* (free with *The Times* last Monday) lists more than 500 restaurants where you can eat a good meal for just £5. The majority are offering a two-course lunch menu; some offer three courses, others offer one main course for £5 and a few extend the offer to include dinner.

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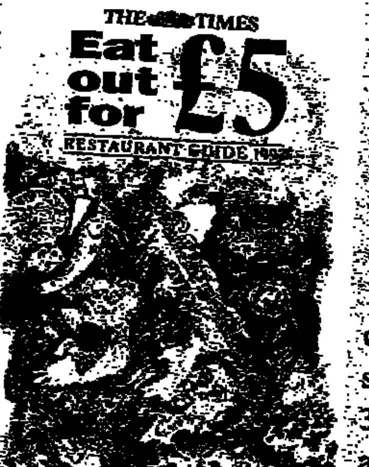

THE TIMES
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RESTAURANT GUIDE 1997

THE TIMES
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TOKEN 6

ADDITIONS TO OUR GUIDE
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Castle Dairy, Wildman St, Kendal, Cumbria. Lunch: M, T, W, Th, F, S, Sun. Two courses for £5. Tel: 01539 721170
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The Battersea Barge, Nine Elms Lane, London SW8. Lunch: M, T, W, Th; Dinner: M, T, W, Th: Two courses for £5. Tel: 0171-498 0004
Bullabaloos on Park St, 85 Park Street, Bristol. Lunch: M, T, W, Th, F, Sat; Dinner: M, T. Two courses for £5. Tel: 0117 9077540
The Musel, 16 Clifton Rd, Clifton, Bristol. Dinner: M, T, W, Th, Sun. Two courses for £5. Tel: 0117-973 2920
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CHANGING TIMES

■ OPINION

Farewell to your local cinema, as Britain breaks out in a rash of multiplexes

■ HERITAGE

New museum shows in London reveal parallels between Brit̲ain in post-Roman times and today

THE TIMES ARTS

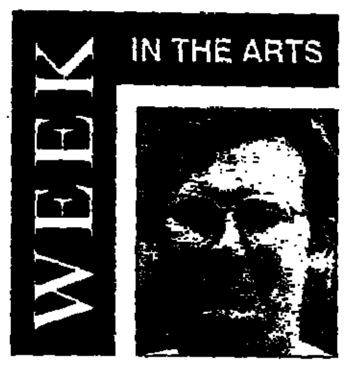
■ COMEDY

Eddie Izzard and chums test their wits in the quickfire atmosphere of *One Word Improv*

■ GOING OUT

From Brahms to the Boo Radleys: entertainment for all tastes is in The Times Directory today

Not showing at a cinema near you



RICHARD MORRISON

They shut our last local cinema last week. It's an Art Deco job, the architectural jewel of Hendon Central, and it's been modestly servicing the celluloid requirements of London NW4 for 60 years. The staff were apparently warned six days before the last reel rolled; the patrons had even less warning. By the time that anybody had thought of protesting, Mr Classic had sidled away. So much for customer care.

The whole thing is damned irritating. Hundreds of kids walked — yes, readers, *walked* — to that old cinema every weekend. Now, in order to satisfy their appetite for intergalactic warfare, their supinely obliging parents must chauffeur them to some ghastly prefab warehouse on a "retail park" miles along the North Circular Road, because the local buses don't go there.

It's also very puzzling for ordinary blokes. Why has our cinema, and hundreds like it, closed? Isn't this a boom time for films? Only this week a report predicted that annual British cinema attendances — the highest for decades at 130 million — will rise to 180 million by 2000.

Well, the sad fact is that our old picture-house was the *wrong kind of cinema*. It could screen only three films simultaneously, and even that tripartite division mocked its original, cathedral-like grandeur. What we need now, our leisure barons have decided, is "cinema cities": multiplexes, usually sited by out-of-town shopping centres, that show a dozen films.

The race to erect these things is fierce. A decade ago, Britain did not possess a single purpose-built multiplex. How did we manage? Now we have 900 multiplex screens, and a further 600 will sprawl across our green and pleasant land by 2000. Most will be vast. Virgin is building a "megaplex" in Leeds with 20 screens, allowing 5,000 punters to be "processed" simultaneously. Battersea Power Station is to become a 30-screen fun palace.

There are two schools of thought about this. The first — with which, as a member of the Union of Fuddy-Duddies, Fogeys and Nostalgists, I have much sympathy — abhors the rise of the multiplex. Only last year the Environment Secretary, John Gummer, described our drift towards American-style shopping and leisure malls as a "disaster", leading to deserted town centres and yet more reliance on the car. But as usual Gum-Gum spoke loudly and wielded a weeny stick. The leisure barons simply nodded politely and then made their property deals as usual.

That's one objection. Another is that multiplexes often leave you dissatisfied. You go because you want to see the new Bruce Willis thriller. But when you arrive you find that it's sold out. So you drift into some syrupy Streisand comedy instead. This is called "choice", which people who run multiplexes are very keen to boast about.

Another thing they are keen to do is detain you as long as possible ("dwell time"), so that you buy lots of popcorn at £2.50 a carton ("secondary spend"). That is why multiplexes now incorporate video-game arcades, even bowling alleys. Last year the British spent £612 million in cinemas, of which an astonishing £150 million went on "secondary spend".

I wouldn't mind this so much if multiplexes spent more of their profits on cleaning up the debris from all this sweetie consumption. The litter-strewn Virgin multiplex at Staples Corner makes the average Tube station seem as pristine as a nun's wimple. Perhaps Mr Branson would care to inspect it the next time his balloon is passing Cricklewood.

Yes, multiplexes have many disagreeable qualities. Yet I support them for one good reason: the alternative trend towards high-tech "home entertainment" is even more depressing. The imaginative world of many children is now circumscribed by computer games and TV. "Video on demand" will soon send any film you desire straight to your living room. Preposterously large "home cinemas" already offer you the "ultimate movie experience" while you slouch on your couch munching your dial-a-pizza. All these developments are deeply antisocial. They are killing whatever small shreds of communal life that urban Britain still possesses.

Much to their credit the cinema barons have anticipated this. They realise that people won't budge from their homes unless they are offered something bigger than they can get from cable and satellite. Hence the attempts to make cinemagoing akin to visiting a theme-park: a whole raft of excitements. And hence Hollywood's current emphasis on blockbusters offering "white-knuckle" thrills that simply don't work except in cinemas. Soon, say some experts, these will be the *only* films released through cinemas: all the rest will go straight to TV and cable.

That is still five years away. What's obvious now is how much effect the blockbuster mentality is already having on *live* entertainment. One reason why West End musicals and stadium rock events are so overloaded with amplification and scenic wonders is that their producers feel they must compete with cinema's noise and spectacle. But how do those in the spoken theatre, classical music and dance worlds entice punters out of their wired-up, digitalised living rooms? Finding an answer to that question is going to be the biggest challenge facing the arts in the next century.

The way we lived now

MUSEUMS:

Isabel Carlisle

on two new shows with a lot in common, centuries apart

Roger Mayne's photograph of *The Soho Fair*, taken in 1958, forms part of the Museum of London's new permanent exhibition, *London Now*

It is an amusing and far from pointless game to speculate on which bits of our material culture will be around a thousand years hence. Because we produce so much that is durable and extensively written about, and because we live in an age of museums, future archaeologists may well be out of a job. More intriguingly, what remnants of life today will seem significant in the year 3000?

Two recently opened exhibitions drive home the truth that what is selected to be shown in a museum tells us as much about ourselves and how we see the past as about the cultures under scrutiny. The British Museum has, in *Heirs of Rome*, an exhibition that proposes that post-Roman Britain was not a barbaric Dark Age, but a period of rapid readjustment and multicultural assimilation. At the other end of the historical spectrum, the Museum of London has found space for a new permanent gallery called *London Now*, which tells the story of the capital from 1945 to the present day. The period that it covers could also be described as one of rapid readjustment and multicultural assimilation, of high anxiety and the end of Empire. There are further links.

Take money. Coins have always been important for archaeologists. They can be dated, the face on the front shows who was in power, their worth indicates how rich people were and even, depending on the context in which the coins are found, what the political situation was. *Heirs of Rome* starts with hoards of money and precious objects, such as that from Hoxne, that were buried in the period of unrest during the withdrawal of Rome from these shores.

As consignments of coin sent by Imperial Rome to pay the army and administration were cut off in AD 410, the money in circulation dwindled to nothing and a coin-based economy only came back into being around 600, when Anglo-Saxon gold shillings began to be struck.

London Now takes our currency for granted, and instead charts our 1996 spending power in terms of bars of soap, from Imperial Leather at 49p to a creation by Jean Paul Gaultier at £20, suggesting a wide gulf between rich and poor.

Then there is transport. *London Now* gives us a Ford Cortina Mark I bought in 1965 for £636. As the information panels point out, its affordability and that of a range of similar cars led to mass car ownership and on to today's problems of pollution and congestion.

In post-Roman Britain your personal transport was as much a status symbol as a car is today. From the Anglo-Saxon cemetery at Sutton Hoo in Suffolk come bridle mounts for a prince's pony embellished in gilt-bronze and silver. The style of ornament is taken from that of late Roman equestrian cohorts, a clear indication that, even two centuries after the Romans had left, visibly to ally yourself with Rome carried great symbolic weight.

When Pope Gregory the Great sent St Augustine to England on a mission to convert the inhabitants, he brought not only Christianity, but an assertion of the continuing power of Rome. It inspired Ethelbert I of Kent to have a written law code drawn up around 602, soon after his conversion. The code made not a jot of difference to his subjects, but as the oldest known document in English it made a great deal of difference to the development of our language and the way it was written.

Of course, what the Museum of London has in abundance, and our picture of Britain post-Rome lacks, are those epheniera that make up the fabric of our daily lives and that, over the centuries, slip away into meaninglessness or vanish altogether. What were the Tennis Cakes for which a 1966 price tag was saved? Will anyone who never saw *The Flowerpot Men* on TV really appreciate coming face to face with the puppets themselves? The handbook on Ecstasy will be a mere curiosity one day, but points to a major worry today, and *London Now* puts the question of "How are we going to solve the problems of contemporary society?" again and again. Is that what the Celts and Anglo-Saxons wondered too?

● London Now, *Museum of London, London Wall, EC2 (0171-600 3699)*. Heirs of Rome: the shaping of Britain AD 400-900. *British Museum, Great Russell Street, WC1 (0171-636 1555) until April 20*

COMEDY

Not word-perfect, but sure to improv

DO NOT be surprised to see an ambulance pulling up outside the Albery Theatre during the next six weeks. Indulging in pure improvised comedy, prompted entirely by one-word topics shouted from the audience, must be exhausting enough.

But Eddie Izzard and his three colleagues also ran the risk of knocking each other unconscious while jousting with their stools (of the wooden variety, I should add) during one particularly strenuous mock-Arthurian sequence. Poor Stephen Frost soon regretted his decision to pick up one of the stage lights to use as a prop. I hope there was a supply of ointment in the wings afterwards.

That element of danger — physical and psychological — is, of course, what gives this kind of performance its edge. If the Channel 4 show *Whose Line is it Anyway?* presents this seat-of-the-pants humour in a relatively sanitised form, with chairman Clive Anderson always ready to rescue a struggling player by throwing in a brisk one-liner, **One Word Improv** revels in the possibility of failure.

And failures there were, particularly in an uncertain opening 45 minutes when it was hard to ignore the unease of the participants. Indeed, without Izzard's inspired presence the first half could very easily have fizzled out into a drab exchange of double-entendres.

For all the smug talk about the brave new world of alternative comedy, the level of inspiration sometimes did not extend beyond a raunchier version of *The Dick Emery Show*, circa 1971. Then again, the rather sycophantic audience must bear some of the responsibility: it is hardly fair to expect feats of genius to flow from suggestions as predictable as "nipples" and "bananas".

When it works, though, it works brilliantly. One early exchange between Neil Mullarkey and Suki Webster, on the unpromising theme of "wobble", took off into an Aristophanean flight of fancy. Apart from a stale gibe at Michael Howard, "jailhouse" made imaginative use of the bars at the side of the stage as Izzard, the hardened recidivist, parodied every prison film ever made: "You screws are all the same," he taunted. "You're all diagonal."

Eddie Izzard: past master of the surreal thing

Mullarkey, rhyming "squeegee" with "Bee Gees", came closest to matching Izzard's surreal invention. But Izzard, once again, stole the show during a cleverly observed schoolroom sketch, suddenly leaping into impersonations of the cast of the old sitcom, *Please, Sir*.

How many of the audience, I wondered, were old enough to catch such references? This is how it must feel to be middle-aged.

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Manchester
7pm 13 February
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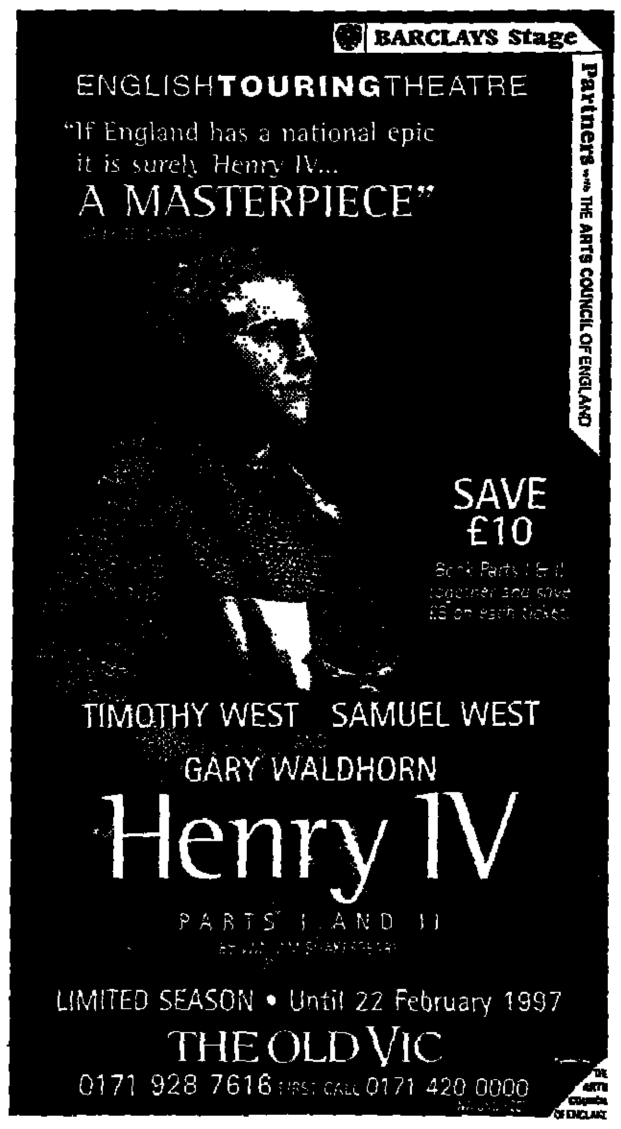

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Only the ignorant could accuse our most influential economist of racism or contempt for the working class, argues **Robert Skidelsky**

Keynes and political correctness

John Maynard Keynes was one of the most complex figures to have graced the study of economics. He was not perfect. Milton Friedman's view that he was a great economist but that Keynesian economics was "a failed experiment" is certainly tenable. But the continuing debate about the value of Keynes's contribution has nothing to do with the routine denigration of his ideas by ignorant scribblers, of which yesterday's story on the front page of *The Guardian* (also reported in later editions of *The Times*) is a prime example.

Literate readers of these newspapers will have been startled to learn that Keynes was a "racist snob with no time for [the] working class". For evidence they are referred to an "overlooked" paper on "Population" which he read to an audience of Oxford academics (including William Beveridge) in 1914. According to the *Guardian* reporter, this "may have remained unpublished because Keynes's followers wanted to preserve his liberal reputation".

The story is based on a sober article by Professor John Toye, published in the current issue of the *Cambridge Journal of Economics*. Beginning with Keynes's 1914 paper, it deals with views on the relationship between population growth and economic prosperity as they shifted during his professional life. Professor Toye argues that Keynes's most recent biographers, Donald Moggridge and myself, have underestimated the neo-Malthusian strand in Keynes's thinking.

In his *Essay on the Principle of Population* (1798), the Rev Thomas Malthus had claimed that population growth was bound to outstrip the food supply. The only alternative to the "natural" checks to overpopulation exerted by famine, pestilence and war was what he called "moral" checks — in other words, abstinence from sexual intercourse.

The "neo-Malthusians" of Keynes's day turned this into an argument for birth control through contraception. However, earlier this century — before Hitler had made it politically incorrect — the Malthusian argument was usually presented in terms of the quality as well as the quantity of population. In other words, neo-Malthusians such as Marie Stopes were also eugenicists: both were part of the progressive army of the day.

The birthrate of working-class families exceeded that of middle-class families, among whom the use of contraception was already widespread. This fact suggested to Keynes, and to most members of his impeccably liberal Oxford audience of 1914, that the quality of the population would deteriorate unless knowledge of contraceptive methods was spread to the working class. (As Toye notes, similar remarks by Keith Joseph in 1974 "almost certainly cost him the leadership of the Conservative Party". Keynes certainly called a spade a spade. "To put difficulties in the way" of contraception, he said, "increases the proportion of the population born from those who from drunkenness or ignorance or extreme lack of prudence, are, not only incapable of virtue, but incapable also of that degree of prudence which is involved in the use of checks."

John Maynard Keynes: racist?

Keynes also dealt with the dangers, as he saw it, of the increasing global imbalance between whites and non-whites, and the effects this would have on the food supply and thus living standards of Europeans. It was in this context that he suggested that stringent immigration controls might become necessary in the future. Keynes continued to apply this neo-Malthusian logic to post-war problems into the mid-1920s, after which he dropped it: partly because his economic theory shifted to the problem of inadequate demand, partly because population in Britain seemed set to decline.

Yes, of course, one can call these attitudes "snobbish" and "racist" if one wrenches them from their cultural context and totally ignores the welfare concerns behind schemes to limit population growth. One can even make them into a news story 83 years later by "spinning" them with garish headlines, hints of non-existent conspiracies, spurious links to "new Labour's switch to Tory economic thinking" and the frisson that any mention of the Bloomsbury Group seems always to arouse.

Although Keynes's reasoning may have been faulty in part, as Toye suggests, the issues relating population growth to food supply and capital stock are still very much alive in the poor countries of the world, and are not without contemporary resonance in Britain. Within an overall decline in the British birthrate since the 1970s, the share of births outside marriage has been steadily rising, to nearly 30 per cent of the total. A high proportion of these are to lone mothers on welfare benefit. So Keynes's concern with "quality" as it relates to wages, employment and the costs of the welfare state may not be quite so obsolete as political correctness would make out.

But the main lesson of this ignorant excursus into the past is that without the spin of "racism" and "snobbism" and all the rest of the rubbish, there would have been no story. It tells us much more about the state of contemporary journalism than about the mind of John Maynard Keynes.

Lord Skidelsky is Professor of Political Economy at Warwick University. He is working on the third volume of his biography of Keynes.

Red star over China-watchers

Jonathan Mirsky says Beijing wants the press to ape the great Edgar Snow

Journalists, Stalin used to say, are "engineers of the human soul". The President of China, Jiang Zemin, was educated in the Soviet Union and likes this phrase, so it is regularly used by the authorities when they urge reporters to place themselves under "the supervision of the Party and the people". Reporters in Hong Kong pay a lot of attention to such injunctions as the July 1 handover nears, especially because they too have received instructions.

Lu Ping, the director of the State Council's Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office, says Beijing distinguishes between "reporting" on certain subjects, such as the status of Taiwan or Tibet, which will be permissible for Hong Kong journalists, and "advocating" — that Tibet is not Chinese, for instance, or that Premier Li Peng's orders on the night of 3-4 June 1989 led to the murders in Tiananmen Square — which will not.

Foreign reporters in Beijing are also under pressure. Using the name "Peking" instead of Beijing, for example, is said to thwart the will of the Chinese people, although "Peking" is printed by Air China on its baggage tags and is the word used by all Cantonese speakers, notably Tung Chee-hwa, who was recently selected in China's capital to be Hong Kong's first Chief Executive, after Chris Patten departs on June 30.

Beijing — or Peking — has offered foreign reporters additional advice: be like Edgar Snow. This eminent American journalist was the most celebrated of Western correspondents to report from China. In 1936 he made a dangerous journey to the cave headquarters from which Mao Zedong directed his guerrilla war against China's nationalist President Chiang Kaishek and the Japanese. His world scoop, *Red Star Over China*, included the only consecutive story — shaped as a heroic myth — that Mao was ever to provide of his life. It remains a key document of Chinese history. Long before Mao's seizure of power in 1949, Snow stated that his victory was both likely and desirable.

Not long ago, the official *China Daily* compared Snow with today's Western reporters, "who look everywhere for the seamy side of society". Be like Snow, the paper suggested, who "wrote exactly what he witnessed . . . The Western media are doing the opposite of what Edgar Snow did 60 years ago."

What was Snow witnessing and reporting? A corrupt and inefficient government despised by many of its subjects. But it was also legitimate and recognised internationally, and Snow was undermining it in his widely published international dispatches by championing dissidents armed with rifles. He was close to other dissidents too, students and young intellectuals, some of whom were Communist agents in danger of torture and execution by President Chiang's Blue Shirts.

Can such subversion be what Peking wants from the newest generation of reporters? Many of them side with political prisoners like Wei Jingsheng and Wang Dan, write negative articles about the Chinese occupation of Tibet (which few of them are permitted to enter), and discuss the corruption of the Party and the disaffection of many peasants and workers. Nowadays this is regarded, in the words of the *China Daily*, as "looking everywhere for the seamy side of society". In short, reporting on communist-led China today as Edgar Snow did on nationalist-led China in the 1920s and 1930s.

Snow's widow, Lois Wheeler Snow, lives in Switzerland. In 1970 she stood on the Tiananmen rostrum with her husband and Mao for a photograph, signalling to Washington that Peking was seeking contact — which was established when Richard Nixon met Mao in 1972. Mrs Snow observed recently that although Chinese diplomats invite her, "I don't go to China any more. Not since Tiananmen. I have written to President Jiang Zemin. I can't put words in Ed's mouth, but I'm sure he'd support me. He'd agree that the Wang Dan trial was terrible. If Ed were in China now, he couldn't write the way he used to."

That would depend on which Edgar Snow was doing the writing. When he returned to China in 1960, 1964, and 1970, he again fell under Mao's spell. He denied in his reports that the Chairman had caused the worst famine in history, and he showed meagre interest in the plight of his old friends in prison. To his diaries, the elderly Snow confided that he "leaned to one side" — the side of authority.

But if in Jiang Zemin's Beijing, Snow were to recover his youthful zeal for investigating the "seamy side" of China; if he were to consort with what he once called "the better people", who today would be dissidents like Wei Jingsheng and Wang Dan; and if he were to predict their eventual triumph (as he predicted Mao's in 1936) — then that Edgar Snow would be denounced at once by Beijing as "fanhua" or anti-China.

Hook, line and sink her

The compleat angler must explain why salmon like the scent of women and men are outdone with the rod

Simon Jenkins

Women catch more salmon than men do. Women are sexy. Therefore salmon like sex. I was taught logic by an elderly tutor with a taste for girls, mouldy sherry and a seminar on "Saying" which he conducted entirely in silence. As far as I can recall he was not a fisherman, but he was a stickler for the rules of inference. He would have loved the correspondence now seizing readers of *The Field*. Its sensational March issue, out in two weeks, has come into my possession. It is exclusive to readers of this column.

The saga began with a letter in the January issue, in which "Anon" ruminated on his recent success on the River Shiel. An injury to his Achilles tendon has forced him to abstain from stalking. Despite 11 years of not catching a salmon, he decided to try one more time. For reasons wholly unexplained (hence the anon), he wound into his fly a tuft of his wife's pubic hair. Within a dozen casts he had caught a salmon. Anon was now confronted with the problem that bedevils all fly-fishermen. A new fly must have a name. Hence the letter. "My problem", he wrote, "is not so much that I have run out of raw materials, but what to call this superb new fly."

Pandemonium ensued. For the first time, the editors of *The Field* have had to censor their letters page. Old-timers appear to have known of the magic hormone for years, yet kept it secret. Was not the great fly-tyer, Jock Scott, renowned as a ladies' man on the upper beats? Charles Ritz wrote in the 1950s about how his luck changed on Norway's mighty River Alto when he took along a fertile laundrymaid, Oola, who embraced him before his first cast. Two salmon immediately appeared and he landed a 29-pounder. He credited his Arctic Wolfhair tubefly. Others knew better.

From the gentle Wye to the mighty torrents of the fiords, women have contributed actually or metaphorically to the snaring of the silvery beasts. Now no fisherman can open his flybox without a smirk or a shudder. The famous Hairy Mary has a new connotation. So do those old standbys, Adams Irresistible, Bonne Bouche, Yellow Belly Flexi, Wiggle-Nymph, Trois Temps, Thunder Stoat, Pot Scrubber, Shimmering Bruiser and the dreaded Chayter's Dropper. In 1843, the Tweed's legendary William Scrope produced Meg-in-her-Braws and Meg-wi'-the-Muckle-Mouth. What did he know? These flies were meant to terrify fish, not man.

In its February issue *The Field* still held back. Another "Anon" reported that his fortunes on the Garry had been transformed this year since marrying an "accommodating memsahib". Others turned to science. The fisherman's bible by Schmookler and Sils, *Rare and Unusual Fly-Tying Materials* offers no guidance, despite Sils being a woman. *The Independent*'s indomitable fishing editor, Keith Elliott, revealed that a fly called Tupp's Indispensible requires "fine, glossy fuzz found in the neighbourhood of a ram's testicle". Tupp was clearly a man of parts. But this took the debate quite the wrong direction. So did the 16th-century Holinshed, who reported in his *Scottish Chronicle* that on Lewis, "if a woman wade through the one fresh river . . . there shall be no salmon seen there for a twelvemonth after."

Next there was a rush to the altar of science. Pundits consulted the "king of the pheromones" (hormone excretions), Peter Behan of Glasgow University. His out-of-print book on *Salmon and Women* wades where others fear even to cast, and was suddenly in demand. Salmon are known to have remarkable sensory mechanisms, enabling them to navigate thousands of miles across the Atlantic to feed and return to their birthplace to spawn. This homing instinct is based on the salmon's ability to smell specific components in fresh water at hundreds of miles' distance.

Professor Behan points out that for salmon, "communication by chemicals would have a pivotal role in their survival, growth and reproductive success . . . It is quite possible that salmon could sense the sex hormones of women in the water and be attracted by them." The professor recounts one experiment where a group of men put their hands into a tank of salmon and the fish darted away. When women did so they crowded round. On this basis, the pheromone theory appears robust (but were these all male salmon?)

In the forthcoming March issue, *The Field* shows more courage. Readers raise the question of hair colour. Does a Spey cock salmon rise to a redhead and a Tweed one only to a blonde? Others worry about supply. Should a "pheromonic salmon regime" be introduced under the common fisheries policy? What about set-aside? Once more it is nomenclature that rules the debate. Top titles include Lunar Rise, Magic Merkin, Frizzie Lizzy, Throat Tickler, Bush Baby and the inevitable Old Wives' Tail. I am told the unprinted ones are mostly variants on Pussy Galore and Fanny Peculiar.

Izaak Walton, author of *The Compleat Angler*: did he know of the latest fly-tying breakthrough?

The best letter is from Lord Burton of Dochfour. His lordship complains that the lure is clearly unsporting and should be banned by legislation. However, he recalls a feather blown from a lady's hat at Ascot which a friend made into six salmon flies of remarkable effectiveness. His name for the new fly is Royal Enclosure.

Women do appear successful at salmon fishing. The British record for a salmon caught with rod and line is still held by a woman, Georgina Ballantine. Her 64-pounder was taken on the Glendelvine beat of the Tay in October, 1922. The epic two-hour struggle, which continued into the night, was conducted with a near paralysed arm to a succession of male chauvinist comments from her father. (The tale is related in Jeremy Paxman's admirable *Fish, Fishing and the Meaning of Life.*) This catch narrowly beat that of another woman, Tiny Morrison, who took a 61-pounder from the Deveron, and Doreen Davey who took a 59-pounder from the Wye. Most impressive was the record of most salmon caught in a day (26), held for many years by Lady Jane Joicy.

Anecdote, science and statistics thus appear to move hand in hand. The sceptics must now sustain two incompatible theses. We know that salmon do not take a fly as food but from some reflex irritation or compulsion. Fishermen will on the one hand fervently maintain that salmon fishing is largely a matter of luck. Buckland and Oglesby preface their encyclopaedia of salmon flies with the bald statement that "the final act of deluding the fish into taking your lure may have little to do with your choice of fly. It may simply be that you were in the right place at the right time." Fly design and fly-tying may be a glorious art, but it is quite distinct from the art of fishing.

Yet fisherman also believe that a marriage of craftsmanship and science does affect their catch. Why else would the Duke of Roxburghe lie on the bottom of his swimming pool to get a salmon's eye view of flies cast by his ghillie on the surface? I speak from some experience. The only time I fished seriously for salmon, in Iceland, saw me averaging one a day. A "scientific" fisherman who worried over every fly and every cast on the identical next beat took an average of five. This was not luck (and certainly not sex). Where one form of artifice works, so presumably can another. A hundred and seventy books on salmon in a fishing catalogue can't all be a waste of time.

Izaak Walton warned that angling was so like mathematics that "there will still be more new experiments left for the trial of other men". What is clear is that in salmon fishing, "more" luck is still not much luck. Salmon numbers are dwindling, and catching them demands a long wait for precious few minutes of sport. If there is a gender bias, I happily concede it. Besides, there are swings and roundabouts. If a woman sends a cock salmon wild with delight, what must she do for a great white shark?

THE TIMES DIARY

I'm a guru

THE DUCHESS OF YORK appears to have a new financial adviser. Not so long ago, waxy-headed John Bryan was her toe-sucker-in-chief and money man. Now, she has the former Lloyd's broker and multi-millionaire restaurateur Nigel Fenner-Fownes.

Fenner-Fownes, an enthusiast for all things holistic, masterminded the duchess's current educational visit to India, from where she made a day-trip to meet a new guru, Sathya Sai Baba. "Ali" Baba, 70, frizzy-haired and saffron-robed, is a self-proclaimed miracle-worker with a worldwide web of followers and his own helipad.

New man Fenner-Fownes

The duchess is staying three hours' drive from his 45-acre estate with three personal assistants in a private villa attached to the Hotel Oberoi, Bangalore. It is unclear who is footing the bill but Fenner-Fownes, who is also there, has for some time been advising her on her financial problems and providing her with a list of lucrative contacts in the City.

The duchess and Prince Andrew have been regular visitors to Fenner-Fownes's Kensington mansion, where snooker is the after-dinner activity. Doubtless she would have popped her head round the door of his restaurant, the Hothouse in Wapping, were it not that *The Sun* is just around the corner.

Obvious news

EITHER the people of Maidenhead are retarded, or else Theresa May, the local Tory prospective parliamentary candidate, just thinks they are. As I have reported before, Miss May likes to issue press releases about her activities, and they make the Smurfs look like Pushkin. Last time we met her, she had been spending time with a local Norwegian vigneron. Now she has been to see Hitachi's European headquarters. The release takes up the tale.

Informed that the "company spends $15 million a day on research and development", Miss May comments: "That shows an impressive commitment to constantly looking to the future and preparing for tomorrow's world today." Is she the evolutionary consequence of the soundbite culture — devoid of irony, banal in the extreme, a robo-candidate? I must root out a picture of her.

● *Presenting the comedy prize to the TV show* Father Ted *yesterday at the first South Bank Show Awards at the Savoy (on the north bank), Dame Barbara Cartland, a concerto in pink, clutched the trophy and looked around. "Where's the person who gets this?" she asked. "Oh yes, I know . . . Father Fred."*

Whatsisname

ETIQUETTE problems are bedevilling *Ocean Rover*, the lacklustre participant in the round-the-world yacht race, which announced this week that Prince Michael of Kent will be joining her crew on Monday for the Wellington to Sydney leg.

Nobody yet knows how to address the Prince. In a force 10, when the mainsail needs hauling in, "Your Royal Highness" is too wordy and the captain cannot be expected to call him "Sir". Suggestions range from Captain Haddock, through Captain Bird's Eye to Micky and "Oi you!"

"Is there a channel where England wins at cricket?"

● *Good news for mobile phone users at Millfield School in Somerset. The headmaster, Christopher Martin, who as I reported has banned pupils from using them, will be retiring at the end of 1998. Until then, pagers are all the rage.*

Comfy chair

AS Norman Stone leaves stage right, Oxford's Europhiles retaliate with a new professorship: the Jacques Delors Chair of European Community Law, which has just been voted permanent by Congregation, the university's decision-making body. The new chair, funded with grants from the European Parliament, will soon be advertised in the press.

Among those for whom Community law is an excuse to make jokes about the Germans, this news has gone down like an oblong banana. "It is what the great Arnold Toynbee would have called 'challenge and response'," says Hywel Williams, John Redwood's right-hand man. "Dispose of Norman and institute this sham. Typical."

● *In fashion circles they are twittering with excitement over a rumour that the Sex Pistols manager and punk svengali Malcolm McLaren is to team up with Elton John to create a fashion musical based on the life of Christian Dior (above) and his models (left).*

Elton John, a Versace man, was not available yesterday and McLaren, once married to Vivienne Westwood, was reticent. "Nothing has actually been agreed on paper," he said with his bouncy natural perm, "but I would love it to happen. Flags will be flying from my rooftops if it does."

P·H·S

YELTSIN AND BREZHNEV

Why comparisons with Soviet leadership crises are misleading

The President of Russia has spent ten of the past 20 months in hospital, recuperating or on "vacation". So precarious is his health that each of the pathetically small number of engagements in his diary has to be marked provisional, whether it be a carefully prerecorded television appearance or tomorrow's planned meeting with Jacques Chirac. Kremlin statements that the Government is functioning normally attract the scepticism once reserved for Soviet propaganda.

Around him, vultures circle. Gennadi Zyuganov, the Communist rival he defeated in last summer's presidential elections, clamours for his resignation. To the right of the political spectrum Aleksandr Lebed — the man most likely to win if elections were held now — insists that Russia needs a new "guiding star", by which he naturally means himself. The Duma, dominated by Yeltsin opponents, toys with impeachment. Opinion polls show that three quarters of ordinary Russians worry desperately about the country's future under an ailing leader, so much so that four fifths think that he should retire.

Russians and foreigners alike have taken to dark talk about the paralysis and stagnation of the years when three sick men — Leonid Brezhnev, Yuri Andropov and Konstantin Chernenko — succeeded each other in the Kremlin. It is becoming fashionable to say that just as that long leadership vacuum led to the collapse of communism, so the Yeltsin twilight now puts at risk both democracy and free market reforms.

If that is the best today's Kremlinologists can do, it is they who would do well to retire. Comparison with the Brezhnev years is meaningless, because it takes far too little account of how profoundly Russia has changed. In the first place, it is no longer ruled by a dictator. Within the Kremlin, power is distributed and, even though the Constitution still concentrates enormous power in Mr Yeltsin's hands, the engine of government need not stall in his absence.

The powerful Russian team at the Davos economic forum this week made precisely this point. Albeit with difficulty, they have piloted the 1997 budget through the Duma's lower house without fatally diluting its radicalism. They plan a three-year programme of public spending cuts more drastic than any British politician would dare to put forward. By 2000, the aim is to reduce the level from the current 40 per cent of GDP — already lower than Britain's — to 25-30 per cent. In Mr Yeltsin's absence, the Government has also successfully reapplied the brakes to inflation, which is down to 21 per cent from 1995's 150 per cent. There is more order in the economy, too: Russian companies are starting to pay the taxes they owe. And there is more realism; the aim is to reach 5 to 6 per cent growth by 2000. For all Russia's huge problems — the unpaid wages, insolvent factories and Communism's horrendous legacy of pollution — this does not match the picture of dangerous drift.

The second and even more important reason why this is no second Brezhnev era is that the role of government itself has changed out of all recognition. Under Communism, all the levers of control were concentrated in the party and the State, with the Kremlin at the apex of a rigidly hierarchical pyramid cemented by fear. Contemporary Russia is still too much at the mercy of powerful cliques; a new corporate oligarchy has made the most of its pell-mell privatisation. But right through Russian society, capitalism has still brought a massive transfer of responsibilities and freedoms to millions of individuals. From street hawkers to the new class of financiers and industrialists, Russia is colourfully, chaotically, pluralist.

Where Mr Yeltsin's indisposition has most impact is in the conduct of foreign policy. That makes life difficult for Western governments. But for Russia itself, his limited participation in government could even be healthy. If he stays on in the background while others run the country, Russians may get used to the idea that they can manage without a "guiding star". The day that they accept this will be the day that Russian democracy truly comes of age.

GREEN AND SWAMPY

Road protesters trespass on local democracy

Blinking into the camera lights, matted and fetid, Swampy emerged from his troglodytic protest to claim that his bizarre burrowings had done more to draw attention to the campaign against the A30 road scheme in Devon than any number of letters to MPs. His claim may be true. But it is also true that his tunnelling and expensive eviction have aroused widespread anger, discredited the environmentalist case against new roads and undermined the democratic consultation process. More seriously, the antics of those nomadic campaigners who take to the treetops wherever a new road is planned delude many people into thinking that they are the brave warriors of an environmental movement that stands alone between our children's heritage and a government intent on concreting over the entire countryside. Nothing could be more simplistic.

Swampy and his friends are johnny-come-latelys in the argument over road-building. Since the initial protests over Twyford Down, the Government has responded adroitly to the concerns of environmentalists. It has broadly accepted the case for halting all roadbuilding except motorway improvements and those bypasses intended to save historic city centres from the destructive avalanche of heavy lorries. Facing down the road lobby, it has begun to introduce the kind of curbs on unrestricted private motoring unimaginable a decade ago. It supports the Private Member's Bill now going through Parliament obliging local authorities to set limits to the growth of urban traffic. And it has even taken unpopular measures, such as raising fuel and road licence taxes, intended to discourage unnecessary journeys, alter the balance between private and public transport and help Britain to achieve its Rio commitments to reduce fossil fuel emissions.

All this has earned John Gummer, the Environment Minister, grudging respect from environmentalists who have long seen the Conservatives as their enemy. Indeed, Labour will have to look seriously at its insouciance over the environment if it is to win the vote of a large block of young people for whom green issues are the single most important electoral consideration. Tony Blair, stung by a strongly critical report from Friends of the Earth last week, is to hold secret talks with environmental groups as part of a new strategy to drive green issues up his political agenda.

What the Government has successfully begun to make clear is that there is no simple green answer to road congestion. Ideologues repeat the mantra on improving public transport. But however much rail transport improves, as is at last now happening, it will be years before trains, trams and buses can curb, let alone reduce, the use of private cars. With the relentless build-up of traffic, something has to be sacrificed. Bypasses are not part of a plot to despoil the countryside: they are essential to stop town centres being befouled by fumes and shaken to madness. The decision whether to build a relief road is increasingly, and rightly, being left to local authorities after exhaustive public inquiries. The choice between saving a beauty spot or an historic city centre is often invidious. Professional protesters trespass on the rights of local people to decide how green should be their valleys.

PLAYWRIGHTS AS COPYWRITERS

Poets sing for their sponsor as well as for sweetness and light

The rediscovery of Ben Jonson's masque to advertise a shopping mall is a literary sensation. As we report today, Jonson wrote his "royal entertainment in praise of trade" to celebrate the opening of the first Burlington Arcade. And the goods which the second most famous poet of the age was commissioned to advertise have hardly changed. Crystal globes, silk flowers and china cats are still shopping bait, beside the gold swizzle-sticks and crocodile handbags. There may have been a better market for "beards of all ages" in 1609. But there is a better market for knitwear for all ages today.

In literature, Shakespeare and Jonson were on the cusp between medieval and modern theatre — and Jonson's mall was on the cusp between medieval and modern shopping. And let there be no shame on a famous playright for writing advertising copy. Jonson and Shakespeare were both poor boys who made good. They set the precedent for the independence of the literary profession. But neither was proud, or rich enough, to refuse a good commission. Were it not for anachronism, a cynic might suspect Jonson of product placement when he wrote in *Every Man in His Humour* "I have it here in Black and White": Lady Macbeth's sleepwalking scene anticipated soap powder commercials. And "O! that this too too solid flesh would melt" should sell slimming potions or corsets.

Compared with the Jacobean entrepreneurs, Brent Cross and the Metro Centre are strangely shy about employing contemporary writers as puffers. When asked what his plays were *about*, Harold Pinter memorably replied, "The weasel under the cocktail cabinet". A man with that gift for a phrase could write brilliant advertising copy. With only minor tinkering, the sinister intruder in *The Caretaker* could deliver a fine line for exclusive footwear: "Look here, mister, I said, I showed him these, I said, you haven't got a pair of shoes, have you, a pair of shoes, I said, enough to help me on my way." Pinter's gift for the sinister beneath the ordinary commerce of life is already close to the tricky copy favoured by admen. "I can't drink Guinness from a thick mug. I only like it out of a thin glass." Beckett too had their gift for using language to express mood rather than to communicate.

Like Jonson, modern creative writers can place products and insinuate shopping lusts without the crude device of calling a play *Waiting for Tesco*. For advertising copy is the same medium as used by Shakespeare and Ben Jonson, Pinter and Beckett. Dorothy Sayers learnt how to create Sir Peter Wimsey from copywriting. Fay Weldon is credited with the slogan "Go to work on an egg". Salman Rushdie may have thought of "It's naughty but nice". Writing is a trade for all seasons. And all sponsors.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN **Telephone 0171-782 5000**

Spanish demands on Gibraltar

From Mr Andrew Stuart

Sir, Mr Rifkind was wise to reject the Spanish demand for joint sovereignty over Gibraltar (report, January 29). As the last British joint-Governor of the New Hebrides, I have only one piece of advice to anyone contemplating shared control of a single territory: "Don't".

The Anglo-French condominium of the New Hebrides (now Vanuatu) was more popularly known as the "pandemonium". With two very different governments in the same territory, the only thing we could agree on was which side of the road to drive; and that only after a series of nasty accidents.

Ironically Spain was involved in this at an early stage. The Spanish King had agreed in 1906 to appoint a neutral president of the Joint Court. That worked until Franco's Spain disposed of its king. In 1978 there were still cases that had been adjourned for 40 years. Meanwhile the Melanesian inhabitants remained technically stateless. One of their politicians wrote a sad poem entitled *Who am I?*

And the New Hebrides ended in near chaos. The British wanted to put down a rebellion on one of the islands: the French on the whole did not. The only agreed policy of the Royal Marines and French Paras, under a French field commander, was to protect the pole on which the flag of Vanuatu was raised on independence day. A joint Gibraltar could be even more bizarre.

Stick with it, Mr Rifkind, if you want to retain your sanity.

Yours faithfully,
ANDREW STUART
(British Resident Commissioner,
New Hebrides, 1978-80),
Long Hall,
North Street, Wareham, Dorset.
January 29.

From Mr Mike Hancox

Sir, The question of the future of Gibraltar is indeed a complicated one, as your front-page report today demonstrates. Surely a degree of imagination on both sides could resolve this problem, as "sovereignty" becomes less and less meaningful a concept.

The people of Gibraltar should be allowed to express their opinion, by referendum, on independence from the UK; but with the proviso that British and Spanish heads of state would be the nominal joint sovereigns of Gibraltar in perpetuity. This could satisfy Gibraltarian desires for self-determination and resolve a source of tension between Britain and Spain.

A similar arrangement exists in Andorra where the French President and a local Spanish bishop are joint heads of state.

Yours faithfully,
MIKE HANCOX,
107 Fountain Road,
Tooting, SW17.
January 29.

From Mr Alf Lomas,
MEP for London North East
(Socialist Group (Labour))

Sir, You report (January 28) that Spain is furious about the visit to Brussels this week by the Chief Minister and other ministers from Gibraltar, and that the director-general of the Spanish Office of Diplomatic Information said that his Government saw "nothing normal at all in the visit by local authorities such as those of Gibraltar to the European Commission in Brussels". He must lead a very sheltered life.

There is a constant flow of local authority representatives to Brussels. The London boroughs have a permanent office there. In any event, Gibraltar is not a "local authority" and the Chief Minister of that country is only following the practice of his predecessors, Joe Bossano and Sir Joshua Hassan, who made frequent visits to Brussels and Strasbourg.

Whatever the present Spanish Government may say, there are many Spanish MEPs who see nothing wrong with this and, although having their own very strong opinions about Gibraltar's relationship with Spain, they are always cordial and friendly towards visiting Gibraltarians.

Spain should stop being so paranoiac about Gibraltar and learn to live in harmony with its neighbours.

Yours faithfully,
ALF LOMAS
(Leader, Gibraltar in Europe
Representation Group),
Ground Floor, Queensway House,
275-285 High Street, Stratford, E15.
January 28.

From Mr Colin G. Alston

Sir, As it is reported that Spain would like to share the sovereignty of Gibraltar with the UK can I assume that Spain is also in discussions with Morocco on sharing the sovereignty of its two North African enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla?

Yours sincerely,
COLIN G. ALSTON,
9 Bickerton Road,
Birkdale, Southport, Merseyside.
January 29.

Weekend Money letters, page 43

Letters that are intended for publication should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046.

Toyota's pressure on euro decision

From Mr J. F. Chown

Sir, The announcement by Mr Hiroshi Okuda, of Toyota, that he might divert investment away from the UK if we do not join the single currency (reports, January 30, 31) emphasises the unnecessary damage that could be caused by present political disputes. Those of us involved in practical commercial decisions must surely accept that (whatever our personal views) the euro may well go ahead, but without the UK. This could hurt our economy, but need not if we handle any opt-out sensibly, rather than emotionally.

UK companies which are part of an international group (whether as parents or subsidiaries) should be explicitly permitted to make up accounts in euros as a local or "functional" currency and have these accounts accepted for tax purposes.

There is already legislation to permit this and a clear announcement would send positive signals to investors that they need not worry about currencies, and to our EU partners that we are keeping the door open.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN CHOWN (Chairman),
J. F. Chown and Co Ltd,
51 Lafone Street, SE1.
January 31.

From Mr Dugald Barr

Sir, First-division multinational companies locate their investments where they believe they will secure the greatest competitive advantage. Various factors can affect this competitiveness: the total costs of employment, the skills, commitment and flexibility of the workforce, site availability and propinquity to markets, governmental inducements and others.

If other factors are disregarded, a depreciating currency must be an aid to competitiveness, and an appreciating one a hindrance. Toyota's president is implicitly suggesting that sterling outside the single currency might be stronger than the euro; otherwise, what could there be to worry about?

This, of course, is what has been constantly denied by the euro-currency enthusiasts, who resort to scare stories about the need for interest rates here to rise to prevent a catastrophic devaluation of the pound against the euro.

From the necessarily single-minded point of view of a UK-based exporter to the EU an appreciating pound outside the European monetary union might be a negative factor (but not wholly negative; and in any case likely to be counterbalanced by other, non-currency factors). From the perspective of the good of the country as a whole, it could be wholly beneficial. Europhiliacs who counsel adherence to EMU as a necessary corrective to the perceived tendency to chronic depreciation by the pound cannot have it both ways.

Yours faithfully,
DUGALD BARR,
1 Canning Place, W8.

From Mr James Bourlet

Sir, Matthew Parris ("Toyota and the Tory right", January 31) is to be applauded for pointing out that businessmen, including Hiroshi Okuda, should be accorded the freedom to state their views on controversial subjects in public.

But this is to ignore the greater problem, namely, how much notice should we take of views taken by those with *commercial* expertise on matters concerning *economic* assessments?

Can the interests of just one company represent the interests of all? To use an old phrase, is it true that what is good for General Motors is good for America?

One is reminded of a full-page advertisement in *The Times* back in the early 1970s when Sir Donald Stokes, then Chairman of British Leyland, claimed magisterially that EEC membership was good for Britain. "He knows", we all thought, "because he is one of our most successful businessmen."

In the event UK membership brought in a flood of continental cars, the progressive decline of the domestic car industry and the eventual sale of the rump to BMW.

We are at fault in giving credulity to experts in one field who make pronouncements on another. And in any case, the fact that Britain's share of Japanese direct investments in Europe has fallen from 65 per cent in the 1960s to little over 40 per cent today suggests that, even for Toyota, we might be better off "out" than "in".

Yours faithfully,
JAMES BOURLET,
London Guildhall University,
Department of Business Studies,
84 Moorgate, EC2.
January 31.

Plight of asylum-seekers in prison

From the Deputy Chief Executive
of the Refugee Council

Sir, The sense of desperation and isolation which asylum-seekers in detention suffer cannot be underestimated (leading article, "Laws of asylum", January 31). This is not the first time that they have resorted to drastic measures to draw attention to their plight.

Asylum-seekers can be held for unspecified periods in British prisons and detention centres without being accused of committing a crime and without an automatic right to challenge that decision before an independent judicial authority. Detention cost approximately £20 million in 1996, but the human cost for those fleeing persecution is infinitely greater.

Dr Christina Pougourides, a distinguished research psychiatrist, studied 15 detained asylum-seekers and published a report in 1996. She found that four had a history of torture and the same number showed post-traumatic stress disorder. Six of the 15 were eventually recognised as refugees or allowed to stay in Britain for humanitarian reasons.

According to government statistics, on October 1, 1996, 75 per cent of those asylum-seekers detained were awaiting an initial decision or the outcome of an appeal.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees' guidelines state that asylum-seekers should be able to challenge their detention promptly "before a competent, independent and impartial authority". Neither the present internal review by immigration officers nor the possibility of being granted bail fulfils this aim.

Yours sincerely,
KATE ALLEN,
Deputy Chief Executive,
The Refugee Council,
3 Bondway, SW8.
January 31.

From Mr Michael Bartlet

Sir, Ann Widdecombe, the Minister for Prisons, in response to a parliamentary question, referred to "our approach to those seeking asylum [as] a model of humanity" (*Hansard*, January 29, p367). Surely, if prison has a proper place in any vision of a sane and compassionate society, it is for those tried and convicted of serious crime.

The prospect of the death of asylum-seekers in Rochester jail while on hunger strike is unacceptable. The Minister for Prisons needs to think again.

Yours truly,
MICHAEL BARTLET
(Parliamentary Liaison Secretary),
Religious Society of Friends
in Britain,
Friends House,
173-177 Euston Road, NW1.
January 31.

Fishing for symbols

From Dr Michael Straiton

Sir, Although the startling idea that United Reformed Church members are to be asked whether they think the Cross should be replaced by a fish, an egg or some other symbol of Christianity (report, January 27) may have been inspired by Rupert Brooke's *Heaven* — "And under that Almighty Fin, the littlest fish may enter in" — the wrong piscatorial choice could be disastrous.

From the 30,000 known types only the angel fish or the flying fish spring to mind as being possibly suitable. Others — such as the coelacanth, the "living fossil", or the electric ray, which gives unpleasant shocks, the sturgeon, with its gristly skeleton and weak jaws, or the gasping lungfish — could make those who advocate change a laughing stock.

Yours sincerely,
MICHAEL STRAITON,
Culver Farm, Old Compton Lane,
Farnham, Surrey.

From the Very Reverend Alan Warren

Sir, The Reverend Colin Evans and the commentators in your report seem to have missed the key point. The symbol of Christianity is not a cross but, graphically, an empty cross — a symbol not of death but of resurrection.

Yours faithfully,
ALAN WARREN,
9 Queens Drive,
Hunstanton, Norfolk.
January 27.

The burden of pain

From Dr Ingvar Bjarnason

Sir, Certain statements in the article "New drugs that lift the burden of pain" (January 27) may unduly raise the hopes of patients at present taking aspirin and aspirin-like drugs — the so-called non-steroidal anti-inflamatory drugs (NSAIDs).

The drug Mobic is not a new drug therapy. It is similar in terms of its action and selectivity to several other NSAIDs, used for many years to treat arthritis and pain. It, too, has the propensity to cause stomach ulcers and their attendant complication of serious bleeding which account for some 20,000 hospital admissions in the UK annually. Unfortunately the new class of drugs to control pain and inflamation which hold the promise of enhanced safety are still undergoing clinical trials and are unlikely to be available to the public for at least two years.

Yours faithfully,
INGVAR BJARNASON
(Senior Lecturer),
King's College School of
Medicine and Dentistry,
Department of Clinical Biochemistry,
Bessemer Road, SE5.

Sharing out the millennium prizes

From Mr Tim Bullen

Sir, The Chairman of the Millennium Commission, in her letter of January 28, paints a series of charming idylls which prove, not undermine, the essential truth of Melvyn Bragg's comments ("Why is London winning all the prizes?", January 20).

Is her catalogue of good deeds and works not for the whole nation to enjoy or, by example, are the various millennium forests that she lists only for the exclusive use of Scots, Lancastrians or Black Country dwellers? It is playing games to select what counts as national enrichment as opposed to regional cultural support.

Greenwich is part of Greater London and nowhere else. Add the £200 million for Greenwich to her own figures and the share of the Millennium Commission cake going to London is 41 per cent. This figure represents well over twice the total grant allocated so far to the North of England.

Yours faithfully,
TIM BULLEN,
6 Broadhurst Gardens,
Reigate, Surrey.
January 29.

From Mr Ronald J. Richards

Sir, The Prime Minister is proposing to announce a one-off extra day's holiday to celebrate the millennium (report, January 29). Can we expect Labour's response to be that they will need to review this if they form the next government?

If the £60 million for a new *Britannia* (letters, January 24, 27, 28, 29) so upsets Mr Brown's delicate budgeting, the loss of a day's work output across the country, with the subsequent loss of tax revenue, would surely wreck it.

Yours faithfully,
RONALD RICHARDS,
Hadley Cottage,
17 Copp Hill Lane,
Budleigh Salterton, Devon.
January 29.

From the Reverend
Graham Blacktop

Sir, Dare one hope that the politicians who order such things will be sufficiently enlightened to add the extra day to the appropriate Christmas or Easter holiday, when we shall, as usual, commemorate the birth, death and resurrection of the person originally responsible for the prevailing millennium hype?

Yours faithfully,
GRAHAM BLACKTOP,
Dairy House,
Wolfeton, Dorchester, Dorset.
January 29.

From Mr Steve Hare

Sir, Given the frantic scrabbling to secure funding for the Millennium Exhibition at Greenwich (reports, January 16, 17, 18), might some particularly far-sighted philanthropist now be persuaded to deposit a modest sum in an interest-bearing account?

Maturing in the year 3000, this might ultimately be adequate to fund a whole host of obelisks, domes and big wheels.

Yours sincerely,
STEVE HARE,
52 Church Road,
Derry Hill, Nr Calne, Wiltshire.
January 20.

From Mrs Felicity Crawley

Sir, Could we not celebrate the millennium with a new bridge at Hammersmith?

Yours truly,
FELICITY CRAWLEY,
36 Wilmington Avenue,
Chiswick, W4.
January 31.

Valid vows

From Canon D. T. W. Price

Sir, According to Halsbury's *Ecclesiastical Law*:

> *if persons knowingly and wilfully consent to or acquiesce in the solemnisation of their* marriage by a person who is not in holy orders, the marriage is void, but it would be otherwise if he was believed to be in holy orders

If Rod Earnshaw and Shirley Wilson believed that the young church server (a Lampeter history undergraduate) who conducted their wedding at Golcar, West Yorkshire, was in holy orders (reports, January 30, 31), it seems to me that their marriage is valid.

Yours faithfully,
WILLIAM PRICE,
Bodlondeb,
65 Bridge Street,
Lampeter, Dyfed.
January 30.

Off with their heads

From Canon Bertie Webb

Sir, My brother had the perfect solution to pubs serving him underfilled pints (News in brief, January 28). In 1946 he took me for a drink. Served with frothing pints he asked the barman "Can you get a double-scotch in these?" "Certainly, Sir," the barman said. "Well, kindly fill them up with beer" retorted my brother.

Yours faithfully,
A. WEBB,
2 Dolphin Close, St John's, Worcester.
January 29.

هكذا من الاصل

COURT CIRCULAR

SANDRINGHAM, NORFOLK
January 31: The Duke of Edinburgh this morning left Royal Air Force Marham for Germany to attend the Funeral of Princess Margaret von Hessen und bei Rhine.

His Royal Highness arrived at Royal Air Force Marham this afternoon.

Sir Brian McGrath was in attendance.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
January 31: The Princess Royal this morning visited Riding for the Disabled (Hong Kong), Pokfulam Riding Stables.

Her Royal Highness today opened the British Education Exhibition and attended a Luncheon at the Convention and Exhibition Centre, Wanchai.

The Princess Royal this evening left Hong Kong for Heathrow Airport, London.

CLARENCE HOUSE
January 31: Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother was represented by the Viscount Churchill at the Memorial Service for Dame Diana Reader Harris which was held in Sherborne Abbey, Dorset, this afternoon.

KENSINGTON PALACE
January 31: The Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowdon, President, the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, was present this afternoon at a Reception to mark the launch of the Judges' video, 'A Case for Balance', held at the Institution of Civil Engineers, Great George Street, London, SW1.

THATCHED HOUSE LODGE
January 31: Princess Alexandra, accompanied by the Hon Sir Angus Ogilvy, this evening attended a Friday Evening Discourse given by Sir Arnold Wolfendale at the Royal Institution of Great Britain, Albemarle Street, London W1.

Church news

Bishop of Worcester

The Right Rev Peter Stephen Maurice Selby, William Leech Professorial Fellow, Durham University, and Assistant Bishop in the dioceses of Durham and Newcastle, *to be* Bishop of Worcester in succession to the Right Rev Philip Harold Ernest Goodrich, who retired on October 31, 1996.

Appointments

The Rev Michael Evans, Priest-in-charge, St Thomas, Kirkby-in-Ashfield: to be Vicar, St Thomas, Kirkby-in-Ashfield and continue as Chaplain to the Ashfield Community Hospital (Southwell).

The Rev Diana Fisher, Assistant Curate (NSM), East Leake, West Leake, Stanford-on-Soar, Rempstone and Costock: to be Assistant Curate (NSM), West Bridgford, St Giles (Southwell).

The Rev Andrew Foran, Team Vicar, Canvey Island (Chelmsford): to be Assistant Curate, St Martin, Dorking and part-time Chaplain to HM Prison, Send (Guildford).

The Rev Jonathan Frost, Assistant Curate, West Bridgford (Southwell): to be Rector, Ash (Guildford).

The Rev Stephen Gallagher, Rector, Loftus-in-Cleveland and Carlin How w Skinningrove (York): to be Priest-in-charge, Lower Beeding and Youth Officer, West Sussex (Chichester).

The Rev David Gorick, Associate Priest, Gotham, St Lawrence: to be Priest-in-charge, Gotham, St Lawrence (Southwell).

The Rev Tony Green, Assistant to the Rural Dean of Rye: to be Priest-in-charge, Groombridge (New) (Chichester).

Canon Roger Greenacre, Chancellor of Chichester Cathedral: to be Precentor of Chichester Cathedral (Chichester).

The Rev Stephen Hardie, Team Rector, Dovercourt and Parkeston: to be *also* Rural Dean of Harwich (Chelmsford).

The Rev Andrew Hawthorne, Assistant Curate, Christchurch (Winchester): to be Team Vicar, Dorchester Team Ministry (Salisbury).

The Rev Mark Hayton, Rector, Broadstairs Holy Trinity: *now also* Rural Dean of Thanet (Canterbury).

The Rev Alan Hirst, formerly Chaplain, HM Prison, Ranby (Southwell): now Chaplain to HM Prison, Wakefield (Wakefield).

University news

London

Queen Mary and Westfield College

Appointments and promotions

Dr John Priestley, Reader in Chemical Neuroanatomy at UMDS, to the Chair of Cell Biology in the Faculty of Basic Medical Sciences, St Bartholomew's, and the Royal London School of Medicine and Dentistry, from January 1, 1997.

Dr A J L Clark, Reader in Molecular Endocrinology in the Faculty of Clinical Medicine, St Bartholomew's, and the Royal London School of Medicine and Dentistry, to be Professor of Molecular Endocrinology.

Mrs Sarah Everett, Secretary to the Joint Medical Advisory Committee, HEFCE, to be Secretary (Medicine and Dentistry) from February 10, 1997.

Honorary Degrees will be conferred on the following:

DLit: Professor Malcolm Bowie, FBA, Marshal Foch Professor of French Literature, Oxford University and Fellow of All Souls; formerly Professor of French Language and Literature and Head of the Department of French, Queen Mary College.

DSc(Eng): Sir Gordon Higginson, formerly Vice-Chancellor of Southampton University; Chairman of the Steering Committee of the Interdisciplinary Research Centre in Biomedical Materials.

LLD: Lord Steyn, Lord of Appeal-in-Ordinary; formerly Chairman of the Advisory Council of the Centre for Commercial Law Studies.

DLit: Miss Janet Suzman, formerly Visiting Professor of Drama, Westfield College.

The following have been elected Honorary Fellows:

The Hon Peter Brooke, CH, MP for the City of London and Westminster South.

Sir John Chalstrey, formerly Lord Mayor of London; formerly Senior Lecturer in Surgery, St Bartholomew's Hospital Medical College.

Professor Lord Currie of Marylebone, Professor of Economics, London Business School; formerly Professor of Economics and Dean of the Faculty of Social Studies, Queen Mary College.

Dame Anne Mueller, former member of Council.

Professor Roy Duckworth, formerly Dean of the London Hospital Medical College.

Dr John Horder, former President of the Royal College of General Practitioners.

Professor Adam Neville, former Principal of the University of Dundee.

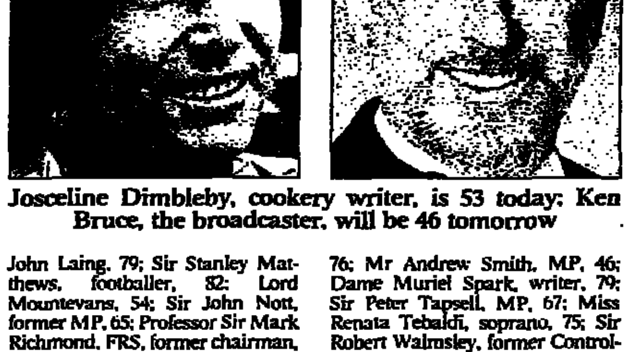
Mrs Margaret Seward, President, General Dental Council.

Dr Joan Thirsk, former Reader in Economic History, Oxford University.

Dr Elizabeth Vallance, Chairman, St George's Healthcare NHS Trust; Director, HMV and Norwich Union; Visiting Professor, Department of Political Studies; former Reader in Government and Politics and Head of the Department of Political Studies, Queen Mary College.

Weekend birthdays

TODAY:
Mrs Jennifer Adams, park manager, Central Royal Parks, 49; Mrs Hazel Alexander, sculptor, 8; Miss Kate Ashbrook, general secretary, Open Spaces Society, 42; Dr C.A. Barnett, Headmaster, Whitgift School, Croydon, 44; Professor G.H. Blake, Principal, Collingwood College, Durham University, 61; Sir Kenneth Bond, former vice-chairman, GEC, 77; Major H. Stanley Cayzer, 87; Mrs Ruth Clarke, former Moderator of the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church, 62; Mr Peter Cooke, banker, 65; Sir Peter Crill, former Bailiff of Jersey, 72; Professor Sir Sam Edwards, FRS, physicist, 69; Mrs Virginia Elliot, three-day eventer, 42; Mr Don Everly, singer, 60; Sir Douglas Hall, former Governor, Somaliland Protectorate, 88; Sir Gordon Hobday, former Lord-Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire, 81; Mr Adam Ingram, MP, 50; Professor Douglas Johnson, historian, 72; Sir Maurice Laing, life president, John Laing, 79; Sir Stanley Matthews, footballer, 82; Lord Mountevans, 54; Sir John Nott, former MP, 65; Professor Sir Mark Richmond, FRS, former chairman, Science and Engineering Research Council, 66; Mr Peter Sallis, actor, 76; Mr Andrew Smith, MP, 46; Dame Muriel Spark, writer, 79; Sir Peter Tapsell, MP, 67; Miss Renata Tebaldi, soprano, 75; Sir Robert Walmsley, former Controller of the Navy, 56; Ms Anne Weyman, chief executive officer, Family Planning Association, 54; Mr Boris Yeltsin, President of the Russian Federation, 66.



Josceline Dimbleby, cookery writer, is 53 today; Ken Bruce, the broadcaster, will be 46 tomorrow

TOMORROW:
Mr Roger Brooke, chairman, Candover Investments, 66; Sir Gordon Bryce, former Chief Justice of the Bahamas, 84; Mr Denis Cassidy, chairman, Liberty, 64; the Earl of Clarendon, 64; Dr Macdonald Critchley, neurologist, 97; Mr Andrew Davis, conductor, 53; the Rev Dr Victor de Waal, former Dean of Canterbury, 68; Lord Eatwell, 52; Mr Abba Eban, Israeli politician, 82; Dr Tony Flower, economist, 46; Sir Norman Fowler, MP, 59; M Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, former President of France, 71; Mr Hughie Green, broadcaster, 77; Mr H.V. Hughes, former Principal, Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester, 71; Mr David Jason, actor, 57; Mr David Jones, chief executive, Next, 54; Sir Chips Keswick, chairman, Hambros Bank, 57; Dame Alix Meynell, former civil servant, 94; Miss Elaine Stritch, actress, 70.

Anniversaries

TODAY
BIRTHS: Sir Edward Coke, jurist and politician, Mileham, Norfolk, 1552; John Philip Kemble, actor-manager, Prescot, Lancashire, 1757; Dame Clara Butt, contralto, Southwick, Sussex, 1873; John Ford, film director, Cape Elizabeth, Maine, 1895; Stephen Potter, humorist, 1900; Clark Gable, actor, Cadiz, Ohio, 1901; S.J. Perelman, humorist, Brooklyn, 1904.

DEATHS: René Descartes, philosopher, Stockholm, 1650; Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, novelist, London, 1851; George Cruikshank, caricaturist, London, 1878; Piet Mondrian, painter, New York, 1944; Buster Keaton, silent film comedian, Woodland Hills, California, 1966.

The US Supreme Court met for the first time, 1790.

The first volume of the Oxford English Dictionary was published, 1884.

The first British labour exchanges opened, 1910.

The Soviet Union was formally recognised by Britain, 1924.

The Pompidou Centre in Paris, designed by Richard Rogers and Renzo Piano, was opened, 1977.

TOMORROW
BIRTHS: Nell Gwyn, actress and mistress of King Charles II, Hereford, 1650; Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, statesman, Périgord, France, 1754; Henry Havelock Ellis, physician and writer, Croydon, London, 1859; Fritz Kreisler, violinist, Vienna, 1875; James Joyce, novelist, Dublin, 1882; James Stephens, poet and novelist, Dublin, 1882; Jascha Heifetz, violinist, Vilna, 1901.

DEATHS: Baldasarre Castiglione, diplomat and writer, Toledo, 1529; Giovanni Palestrina, composer, Rome, 1594; Francis Hayman, painter, London, 1776; Dmitri Mendeleyev, chemist, St Petersburg, 1907; John L. Sullivan, bare knuckle fighter, Abington, Massachusetts, 1918; Sir Owen Seaman, Editor of *Punch* 1906-32, London, 1936; the Rev James Owen Hannay (George Birmingham), novelist, London, 1950; Buddy Holly, singer and songwriter, died in an air crash, near Mason City, Iowa, 1959; Bertrand Russell, 3rd Earl Russell, mathematician and philosopher, Plas Penrhyn, Merionethshire, 1970; George Whipple, pathologist, Nobel laureate 1934, New York, 1976.

Ireland was represented in the British Parliament for the first time, 1801.

Greece declared war on Turkey, 1878.

The state funeral of Queen Victoria, 1901.

Major-General Idi Amin declared himself the absolute ruler of Uganda, 1971.

Dr John Merlin Thomas

There will be a Memorial Service for John Merlin Thomas, MA, DPhil, Scholar of New College, 1938-41, Fellow 1953-87, Emeritus Fellow 1987-96, on Saturday, March 15, 1997, in New College Chapel at 3.00pm.

Latest wills

Hugh Prescot **Morle**, of Willingdon, Eastbourne, Sussex, left £1,290,049 net.

He left £20,000 to the British Red Cross Society, and to the RNIB; £15,000 each to the Mental Health Foundation, Age Concern England, the Cancer Research Campaign, and the RSPCA.

Ivona Jessie **Mays-Smith**, of Herringswell, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, left £1,462,668 net.

She left £500 to the All England Ladies Lacrosse Association and to the Royal Worlington Golf Club; £250 to any person employed in her service.

Memorial services

Dame Diana Reader Harris

Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother was represented by Viscount Churchill at a service of celebration and thanksgiving for the life of Dame Diana Reader Harris, Headmistress of Sherborne School for Girls 1950-75, held yesterday in Sherborne Abbey.

The Rev Eric Woods officiated and the Very Rev the Hon Hugh Dickinson led the prayers. Miss Anne Dixon, Senior Trustee of Sherborne Old Girls Union, read the lesson. Mr Christopher Lucas and Ms Sylvia Read, of Theatre Roundabout, read from Dame Diana's own writings.

Mr Christopher Buxton, cousin, paid tribute and the Right Rev John Taylor gave an address. Members of the family, Miss June Taylor (headmistress) with many Old Girls, governors, past and present members of staff, representatives of organisations with which Dame Diana had been connected, and many friends were among those present.

Vice-Admiral Sir Hugh Thompson

The First Sea Lord was represented by Rear-Admiral Frederick Scourse, Acting Controller of the Navy, held yesterday in Bath Abbey. Prebendary Richard Askew officiated, assisted by the Rev Richard Hall.

Rear-Admiral Scourse, Mr Patrick Thompson, son, Commander N.D.B. Williams and Sir Robert Easton read the lessons. Rear-Admiral Robin Shiffner gave an address.

Dinner

The Earl of Lauderdale

Lady Olga Maitland, MP, President of the Defence and Security Forum (incorporating Families for Defence), was the host at a dinner given last night at the House of Lords by courtesy of the Earl of Lauderdale. Mr Terry Waite was the guest speaker.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr D. Carratu and Miss G. Elwood

The engagement is announced between Domenic, son of Mr Tony Carratu and Mrs Bridget Carratu, of London, and Geraldine, daughter of Mr and Mrs Ray Elwood, of Cork City.

Mr A.C. Hunter and Miss C.L. Dennis

The engagement is announced between Andrew (Chuffy), elder son of Mr and Mrs Martin Hunter, of Lincoln, and Lucy, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs Peter Dennis, of Alresford, Hampshire.

Mr A.J. Sclater and Miss A.M. Oliver

The engagement is announced between Alastair, son of Mr and Mrs Patrick Sclater, of Stalbridge, Dorset, and Anne, daughter of Mr Geoffrey Oliver and the late Mrs Carmel Oliver, of Adelaide, Australia.

Mr P.A. Wolrige Gordon and Miss S.L.E. Edwards

The engagement is announced between Patrick Adam, son of Mr and Mrs Patrick Wolrige Gordon, of Ythan Lodge, Newburgh, Aberdeenshire, and Sarah Louise Elizabeth, daughter of Dr Elizabeth Edwards, of High Bannerdown, Batheaston, Bath.

Service dinner

University of Wales Air Squadron

Air Marshal G.A. Robertson, Chief of Staff, Headquarters Strike Command, and Professor Keith Robbins, Senior Vice-Chancellor, University of Wales, were the guests of honour at the annual dinner of the University of Wales Air Squadron held last night at RAF St Athan. Squadron Leader Andy Cairncross, Commanding Officer, presided. The Lord-Lieutenant of South Glamorgan, the Air Officer Commanding and Commandant RAF College Cranwell, and the Vice-Chancellors of the University of Wales, Bangor, Cardiff, and Swansea, and the Air Officer, Wales, were among the guests.

Church services tomorrow

Eighth Sunday before Easter

ST ANDREWS CATHEDRAL, ABERDEEN: 8 HC; 10.15 S Euch, Phrygian Mode (Wood), Nunc Dimittis (Gibbons), The Provost; 6.30 Choral ES, Stanford in G, When to the temple (Eccard).

BELFAST CATHEDRAL: 10 HC; 11 S Euch & Holy Baptism, Rejoice in the Lord alway (Anon), Jackson in G, Ave verum corpus (Byrd); 3.30 Liturgy for Candlemas, Fauxbourdons (Tallis), What Cheer, Good Cheer (Warlock), Ave Regina (Lotti), See see the world is incarnate (Gibbons), When Jesus our Lord was born (Mandelssohn).

BIRMINGHAM CATHEDRAL: 9 MP; 9.15 HC; 11 Choral Euch, Blair in G, Wakefield Service (Carter), Tantum ergo (Duruflé), Rev D Lee; 4 Choral E, Sumsion in G, The Presentation of Christ in the Temple (Eccard); 5.30 Asian Christian Service.

BLACKBURN CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.15 Choral M, Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace (Stanford), Canon Hindley; 10.30 Euch, Canon Hindley; 4 Choral E, When Mary to the temple came (Eccard), Canon Galilee.

BRECON CATHEDRAL: 8 Holy Euch; 11 M When to the temple (Eccard), The Dean; 3.30 E, Purcell in E minor, God is light and in him there is no darkness.

BRISTOL CATHEDRAL, College Green: 7.40 M; 8 HC; 10 Choral Euch & Confirmation, The Gloucester Mass (Shephard), Author of life divine (Archer), The Bishop of Swindon; 3.30 Choral E, Collegium Regale (Howells), The spirit of the Lord (Elgar), Canon J Simpson.

CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.30 M; 9.30 S Euch; 11 S Euch, Missa Brevis in C (Spatzenmesse), Lumen ad revelationen (Byrd), Rev P Brett; 12.30 Holy Baptism; 3.15 E, Senex puerum portabat (Byrd), Second Service (Gibbons), When to the temple (Eccard); 6.30 Compline.

CARLISLE CATHEDRAL: 7.45 M; 8 HC; 10.30 S Euch, Mit Fried und Freund ich fahr dahin (Buxtehude), Schubert in G, Te Deum (Reger), Archdeacon D Turnbull; 3 EP; 6.30 S Euch, Jackson in G, O taste and see (Vaughan Williams).

CHELMSFORD CATHEDRAL: 7.30 MP; 8 HC, Canon B Thompson; 9.30 Euch & Parade, Rev J Jones; 11.15 S Euch, When to the temple (Eccard), Wood in F, Canon B Thompson; 6 Choral E, Set me as a seal (Walton), Blessed City (Bairstow), Rev I Moody.

CHESTER CATHEDRAL: 7.45 Litany, Rutter in D, Ave verum corpus (Byrd), Rev C Samuels; 11.30 Choral M, Leighton in D, Let all the world (Leighton), Canon J Newcome; 3.30 Choral E, St Paul's Service (Howells), When to the temple (Eccard); 6.30 Evening, Canon J Newcome.

CHICHESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 M, Te Deum (Vaughan Williams in G), Jubilate (Walton), Let thy merciful ears, O Lord (Mudd), The Treasurer; 11 S Euch, Missa Sancti Nicolai (Haydn), Surge illuminare (Palestrina), The Chancellor; 3.30 E, Stanford in A, Hodie cum gaudio (Bouzignac).

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL, Oxford: 8 HC; 10 M & Sermon, Benedicite (Jackson in G), Rev Prof M Wiles; 11.15 S Euch, Mass for four voices (Byrd), O Lord the maker of all thing (Mundy), Canon Jeffery; 6 E, Stanford in C, When to the temple (Eccard).

DURHAM CATHEDRAL: 8 HC, Canon M Perry; 10 M, The Short Service (Gibbons), Senex puerum portabat *à 5* (Byrd), Canon D Hodgson; 11.15 HC, Mass in G (Schubert), Senex puerum portabat *à 4* (Byrd), The Dean; 3.30 E, Nunc dimittis (Holst), When to the temple (Eccard).

ELY CATHEDRAL: 8.15 HC, Rev J Inge; 10.30 S Euch, Mass (Stravinsky), Ave regina coelorum (Finnissy), Rev J McFarlane; 3.45 E, Candlemas Procession, Collegium Regale (Tavener), Stanford in G, When to the temple (Eccard).

EXETER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.45 S Euch, Mass in G (Schubert), Canon A Mawson; 11.15 M, Te Deum (Sumsion in G), How lovely are the messengers (Mendelssohn), The Dean; 3 E, Stanford in A, Illuminare Jerusalem (Judith Weir); 6.30 Evening, Senex puerum portabat (Byrd), Rev G Daxter.

GUILDFORD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC, Canon Dr M Palmer; 9.45 S Euch, Mass for five voices (Byrd), Hodie beata virgo (Byrd), The Sub-Dean; 11.15 M, Third Service (Tomkins), When to the temple (Eccard), Rev J Clark; 6.30 E, Gloucester Service (Howells), Vox dicentis (Naylor), Canon Dr M Palmer.

LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10.30 S Euch & Liturgy of Candlemas, Stanford in B flat, Senex puerum portabat (Byrd), Holy is the true light (Harris), The Chancellor; 3.30 E, Dyson in D, When to the temple (Eccard).

LINCOLN CATHEDRAL: 7.30 M; 7.45 L; 8, 12.30 HC; 9.30 S Euch, My eyes for beauty pine (Howells), I the Lord of sea and sky (Schutte), The Precentor; 11.15 M, Missa Sancti Nicolai (Haydn), The Subdean; 3.45 E, Stanford in G, When to the temple (Eccard).

NEWCASTLE CATHEDRAL: 7.30 M; 8 HC, The Archdeacon; 9.30 S Euch, Mass for three voices (Byrd), Senex puerum portabat (Byrd), The Provost; 6 Choral E, The Epiphany Carol Service.

NEWPORT CATHEDRAL: 10.30 Family Euch, Nunc dimittis in E flat (Bairstow); 6.30 Choral E, Collegium regale (Wood in F), Greater love (Ireland).

NORWICH CATHEDRAL: 7.30 MP; 8, 9.15 HC; 10.30 S Euch & Candlemas Procession, O sacrum convivum (Messiaen), Canon F Telfer; 3.30 Festal E & Candlemas Procession to the Font, Collegium regale (Tavener), Thou must leave thy lowly dwelling (Berlioz); 5.30 Education Sunday.

PETERBOROUGH CATHEDRAL: 8.15 HC; 9.30 M, Ireland in F; 10.30 Euch, Schubert in G, When to the temple (Eccard), The Precentor; 3.30 E, Noble in A minor, Beloved now are we the sons of God (Keeton).

PORTSMOUTH CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.30 Parish C, Petersfield Mass (Mawby), O salutaris hostia (Nicholson), Canon D Isaac; 11 S Euch, Messe Solenelle (Langlais), The Call (Vaughan Williams), Canon C Bradley; 6.30 Festal E with Procession & Incense, Hail gladdening light (Wood), Howells in G, Give unto the Lord (Elgar), The Provost.

RIPON CATHEDRAL: 8 Euch, Rev D Murfet; 9.30 Parish Euch, Harris in F, Lord now lettest thou thy servant (Byrd), Canon K Punshon; 11.30 M, Te Deum (Darke in F), Jubilate (Stanford in F), Laetentur coeli (Byrd); 12.30 Euch, Canon H Garside; 4.30 E; 5.30 Choral Euch & Candlemas Procession, Jackson in G, When to the temple (Eccard), The Dean.

ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.45 M, Festival Te Deum (Whitlock), Senex puerum portabat (Byrd); 10.30 S Euch, Missa brevis Sancti Joannis de Deo (Haydn), Senex puerum portabat, Rev Dr R Waller; 3.15 E, Stanford in C, When to the temple (Eccard), Hilton (Amen); 6.30 Candlemas Euch.

SALISBURY CATHEDRAL: 8 HC, Very Rev D Watson; 10 Euch, Schubert in G, When to the temple (Eccard), Canon J Osborne; 11.45 M, Sumsion (Te Deum in G), Jubilate (Walton), Nunc dimittis in G (Stanford), Rev A Philip; 3 E & Procession, Fifth Service (Tomkins), Senex puerum portabat (Byrd), When to the temple (Eccard); 6 Taize, Canon J Osborne.

SHEFFIELD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 MP; 10.30 S Euch, Missa Brevis (Berkeley), When to the temple (Eccard); Canon C Smith; 11.45 Text for the Day; 6.30 Festal E, Sermon & Admission of Lay Assistants, Wesley in E, Evening Hymn (Gardiner), The Bishop.

SOUTHWELL MINSTER: 7.30 M & Litany; 8 HC; 10.30 Euch, Schubert in C, Let all mortal flesh keep silence (Bairstow), Very Rev R Wise; 3.15 Procession E, The Southwell Service, When to the temple (Eccard), Admission of Stewards.

TRURO CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9 M; 10 Solemn S Euch, When to the temple (Eccard), Missa Sancti Nicola (Haydn), The Treasurer; 6 Solemn E, Jackson in G, Ave verum corpus (Byrd), The Chancellor.

WAKEFIELD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC, Canon I Knox; 9.15 Parish C, Ave Maria (Peeters), Mr J Clark; 11 Solemn Euch, Missa Sancti Johannis de Deo (Haydn), All in the morning (arr Vaughan Williams), Mr J Clark; 4 Solemn E, Dyson in D, When to the temple (Eccard), Canon R Giles.

WELLS CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.45 S Euch, Missa Brevis (Palestrina), Right Rev J Thompson; 11.30 M, Collegium Regale (Howells), We wait for thy loving kindess (McKie); 3 Solemn E & Procession, The Second Service (Gibbons), When to the temple (Eccard), Rev P de Lucas.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY: 8 HC; 10 M, Britten in C, When to the temple (Eccard), Sis H Markey; 11.15 Euch, Mass in five parts (Byrd), Senex puerum portabat regebat (Byrd), Ave verum corpus (Philips), Canon A Harvey; 3 E & Procession, Collegium Regale (Howells), Senex puerum portabat adoravit (Byrd), A hymn to the Virgin (Britten), Canon A Harvey; 5.45 Recital; 6.30 Evening, Canon D Gray.

WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10.30 S Euch, Messe Solennelle (Vierne), Nunc Dimittis (Holst), When to the temple (Eccard), Rev P Morgan; 3.30 E & Installation, Jackson in G, Senex puerum portabat (Byrd), The Bishop.

WORCESTER CATHEDRAL: 9.30 Family Euch for Candlemas, Canon I MacKenzie; 11 Candlemas Euch, Missa Papae Marcelli (Palestrina), Hodie Beata Virgo (Byrd), Canon D Thomas; 4 E, Bullock in D, When to the temple (Eccard); 6.30 Licensing of Diocesan, The Bishop of Dudley.

YORK MINSTER: 8, 8.45 HC; 9.30 M; 10 S Euch, Missa pro victoria (Victoria), Rev Prof N Treasurer; 11.30 S Euch, Jackson in G; 4 EP; 6.30 Candlemas Processional Service.

ST ASAPH CATHEDRAL, Clwyd: 8 HC; 11 Choral Euch, Missa Sancti Johannes de Deo (Haydn), Very Rev K Goulstone, The Dean; 3.30 Choral E, When to the temple (Eccard).

ST DAVIDS CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.30 Cymun Bendigaid, Y Deon; 9.30 Parish Euch, The Succentor; 11.15 Choral M, Stanford in C, Purest and highest (Stanford), The Minor Canon; 6 Choral E, Harwood in A flat, When to the temple (Eccard), The Canon.

ST EDMUNDSBURY CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; The Provost; 10 Orchestral S Euch with Procession, Missa Brevis in G (Mozart), Hymn to the Mother of God (Tavener), Rev V Herrick; 11.45 HC, Canon M Mingins; 3.30 Choral E, When to the temple (Cousins), The spacious firmament on high (Drayton).

ST GEORGE'S CATHEDRAL, Southwark: 8, 10, 6 LM; 11.30 Solemn M, Blessing of Candlemess, Haydn in G, Ubi Caritas (Duruflé), Fr J Cronin; 5 EP & Benediction.

ST GILES' CATHEDRAL, Edinburgh: 8, 10 Morning HC, Mass for five voices (Byrd) The Minister; 11.30 Morning Service, Lord I call upon thee (Bairstow), The Minister; 6 St Giles at Six, Organ Duet; 8 Evening, Rev H Smith.

ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL, Edinburgh: 8 Euch; 10.30 Euch, Mass in four parts (Byrd), Nunc Dimittis (Holst), The Provost; 3.30 Choral E, Wood in E flat No 2.

ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL, London: 8 HC; 8.45 M; 11 S Euch, Vaughan Williams in G minor, Nunc dimittis (Holst), When to the temple (Eccard), Archdeacon of London; 3.15 E, The Service on Plainsong Tones (Wills), Hodie beata Virgo (Byrd), Rev P Bickersteth; 5 Recital.

RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL, Ennismore Gardens, London, SW7: 10.30 Divine Liturgy, Kievan and traditional polyphony, Diocesan Bishop Met. Anthony.

ALL SAINTS, Margaret Street, W1: 8, 5.15 LM; 10.20 MP; 4.30 HM, Credomesse (Mozart), Rev P Johnstone; 6 E&B, The Second Service (Gibbons), Rev I Davies.

ALL SOULS, Langham Place, W1: 9 Communion; 11 Guest, Rev J Cook; 6.30 Preb R Bewes.

THE ASSUMPTION, Warwick Street, W1: 11 Missa brevis (Berkeley), Dextera Domini (Schumann), Tristis est anima (Lassus).

CHELSEA OLD CHURCH, SW3: 8 HC; 10 Children; 11 Parish Communion, Rev Dr P Elvy; 6 E, Rev D Bean.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE CHURCH, Curzon St, W1: 11 Sunday School.

CROWN COURT CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, Covent Garden, WC2: 11.15 Rev S Hood; 12.20 HC; 6.30 Rev S Hood.

FARM STREET, W1: 8, 9.30, 12.30, 4.15, 6.15 LM; 11 HM.

HOLY TRINITY BROMPTON, Brompton Road, SW7: 9 ASB HC, Rev S Downham; 11 Morning, Rev N Gumbel; 5, 7 Informal, Mr G Coates.

THE ORATORY, Brompton Road, SW7: 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 Mass, 12.30, 4.30, 7; 3.30 V & B.

ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH: Iverna Gdns, W8: 11 Holy Mass, Archbishop Y Gizirian.

WESLEY'S CHAPEL, City Road, EC2: 11 Morning & HC, Rev Dr L Griffiths.

WESTMINSTER CENTRAL HALL (Methodist), SW1: 11 Rev Dr P Graves; 1.30 Youth Workshops/Worship; 6.30 HC, Rev B Lucas.

ST BARTHOLOMEW THE GREAT, Smithfield, EC1: 9 HC; 11 Choral Euch, Missa Beata Dei Genetrix (Lobo), The Rector; 6.30 E, Short Service (Gibbons), N.D. (Byrd), Gaude gaude gaude Maria (Sheppard), The Rector.

ST BRIDE'S, Fleet Street, EC4: 11 Choral M & Euch, Mozart in B flat, I was glad (Parry), Beati quorum via (Stanford), Canon J Oates; 6.30 Choral E, Nunc Dimittis (Stanford in A), Thou O God art praised in Sion (Boyle), Rev J Papworth.

ST CLEMENT DANES: 11 Air Training Corps Annual Service, The Lord is my shepherd (Schubert), Rev J Coyne.

ST COLUMBA'S CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, Pont Street, SW1: 11 Rev W Cairns; 6.30 Rev C Macleod.

ST ETHELDREDA'S, Ely Place: 9, 11 Mass, Mass in Honour of St Joseph (Peeters), Senex Puerum (Byrd), Nunc Dimittis (Wood).

ST GEORGE'S, Hanover Square, W1: 8.30 HC; 11 S Euch, 11 Missa Brevis (Viadana), The Rector.

ST JAMES'S, Garlickhythe, EC4: 10.30 S Euch (1662), Robin Sherlock.

ST JAMES'S, Sussex Gardens, W2: 8 Euch; 10.30 S Euch, Missa Bel Amfitrit (Lassus), When to the temple (Eccard), Rev B Wilson; 6 Choral E, Fauxbourdons (Andreas), O nata lux (Tallis).

ST JAMES'S, Piccadilly: 8.30 HC; 11 S Euch, Rev N Holtam; 5.45 EP.

ST JOHN'S, Stratford E15: 11 Family Communion, Sonata No 8 Scherzoso (Rheinberger), Rev D Richards; 6.30 EP & Praise, Rev D Richards.

ST LUKE'S, Chelsea, SW3: 10.30 S Euch, When to the temple (Eccard), Rev M Colmer; 12.15 HC; 6.30 E, Nunc Dimittis (Holst), Rev M Fuller.

ST MARK'S, Regents Park Rd, NW1: 8 HC; 9.45 Family Communion; 11 S Euch, Missa Brevis (Berkeley), When to the temple (Eccard), Nunc Dimittis (Stanford in C), Rev T Jones.

ST MARGARET'S, Westminster, SW1: 11 S Euch, Rev R Holloway.

ST MARTIN-IN-THE-FIELDS, WC2: 8 HC; 9.45 Euch, Rev C Herbert; 11.30 Visitors to London, Rev B Schunemann; 12.30 HC, Rev C Herbert; 2.45 Chinese, Rev G Lee; 6.30 Evening Rev B Cave.

ST MARY ABBOTS CHURCH, Kensington W8: 8, 12.30 HC; 9.30 Parish Euch, Rev F Gelli; 11.15 Choral M, Vicar; 6.30 E, Rev M Fuller.

ST MARY-THE-VIRGIN, Primrose Hill: 8 HC; 10.30 Parish Euch, Sumsion in F, Greater love hath no man (Ireland), Rev J Ovenden; 6 Choral E, Sumsion in G, Senex puerum portabat (Byrd).

ST MARYLEBONE, Marylebone Road, W1: 8 HC; 11 Choral Euch, Nelson Mass (Haydn), Hodie beata Virgo (Byrd), Rev R McLaren; 6.30 Ministry of Healing, Rev P Flowers.

ST MICHAEL'S, Cornhill, EC3: 11 Choral Service, Missa Brevis (Palestrina), Ave verum corpus (Byrd).

ST PAUL'S, Wilton Place, SW1: 8, 9 HC; 11 Missa pontificalis (Perosi), When Mary to the temple (Eccard), O sacrum convivium (Messiaen), Rev C Courtauld.

ST STEPHEN'S, Gloucester Road, SW7: 9 LM; 11 HM, Missa Gloria in Excelsis Deo (Gruber), Nunc Dimittis in F (Dyson), Cantate Domino (Pitoni), Laudate Dominum (Hassler), Fr R Bushau.

CHAPEL ROYAL OF ST PETER AD VINCULA, HM Tower of London: 9.15 HC, Rev P Abram; 11 M & Sermon, Jubilate (Britten in C), Nunc Dimittis (Holst), Rev P Abram.

CHAPEL ROYAL, St James's Palace: 8.30 HC; 11.15 S Euch, Stanford in C, Canon G Jones.

CHAPEL ROYAL, Hampton Court Palace: 8.30 HC (1662); 11 Choral Euch, Collegium Regale (Dark), When to the temple (Eccard); 3.30 Short Service (Ayleward), Senex puerum portabat (Byrd).

GROSVENOR CHAPEL, South Audley Street, W1: 8.15 HC; 11 S Euch, Missa Brevis in F (Mozart), When to the temple (Eccard), Rev S Hobbs.

QUEEN'S CHAPEL OF THE SAVOY, WC2: Presentation of Christ in the Temple; 11 S Euch, Rev W Chivers.

GRAY'S INN CHAPEL, 8 South Sq, WC1R: 8.30 HC; 11.15 Divine Service.

THE TEMPLE CHURCH, Fleet Street: 8.30 HC; 11.15 MP, Te Deum Laudamus (Gray in E), Jubilate Deo (Ireland in C), Rev J Halliburton.

GUARDS CHAPEL, Wellington Barracks, SW1: 11 Choral HC, Missa Brevis in C (Mozart), Be still my soul (Whitlock), Band of the Welsh Guards, Rev P Bosher.

ROYAL NAVAL COLLEGE CHAPEL, Greenwich, SE10: 11 S Euch (BCP), Darke in F, When to the Temple (Eccard), Rev C French.

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PERSONAL COLUMN

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FAX: 0171 481 9313

Be tolerant with one another and forgiving, if any of you has cause for complaint; you must forgive as the Lord forgave you. Colossians 3 : 13

BIRTHS

ANDERSON - On January 27th at The Princess Anne Hospital, Southampton, to Claire (née McDermott) and David, a titan, Guy Joseph Alexander.

DINGEMANS - On 29th January 1997, to Janet and James, a daughter, Freya, a sister for Phoebe and Alexander.

FULLICK - On 30th January 1997 at Queen Charlotte's Hospital, to Rima and Frank, a beautiful daughter, Chloe Teresa, a sister for Hannah.

GRIFFITHS - On January 27th at The Portland Hospital, to Iona (née Beasley) and Mark, a beautiful daughter, Lydia Maria Alexis.

HAMILTON - On January 24th at The Portland Hospital, to Stephanie and Mark, a beautiful baby boy, William Henry.

MACLACHLAN - On January 27th 1997, to Caroline (née Findlay) and Rory, a second son, Angus Patrick.

MORGAN - On January 25th, to Jo (née Marcandonatos), wife of Nicholas, a daughter, Anastasia Sophia.

MORTIMER - Beth Eloise, a beautiful daughter to Karen and Dave, half-sister to Ed, Jess and Roger, born 29th January, a virtuoso performance by Bedford's marvellous midwives.

RAMSAY - On Sunday 26th January, at RUH, Bath, to Beatriz (née Gonzalez Pacho) and Michael, a son, William Bertram.

SINHA - On 10th January 1997 at King's College Hospital, to Angela and Joydeep, a beautiful daughter, Natasha Jasmin.

BIRTHS

SMITH - On January 25th in Johannesburg to Tessa (née Pentney) and Miles, a son, Maxim Miles Llod, a brother for Alexander and Digby.

STERN - On January 24th 1997, in France, to Serena (née Murdoch) and Joël, a daughter, Charlotte Anne Pascale, a sister for Thibaut and Arnaud.

WESTON - On January 31st 1997, to Tracey and Nicholas, of Sydney, a daughter, Jessica Louise, a sister to Caitlin and Alisa.

WRIGHT - On Tuesday 21st January 1997, to Ann (née Fitzgerald) and Peter, a daughter, Elinor Louise.

GOLDEN ANNIVERSARIES

WHITE:THOMPSON - On 1st February 1947, at the Chapel of the Duke Of York's Royal Military School, Dover, Kent, Captain Dennis Birch White (Royal Artillery) to Cynthia Thompson. Present address: 228, Goldington Road, Bedford, MK40 3EB.

DEATHS

ARNOLD - Roxanne Beatrice, died peacefully in hospital on January 11th 1997. Funeral was held on 27th January 1997. Any donations for a charity to be decided to Vickers & Co. Solicitors, 111 High Road, Willesden Green, London, NW10 2TB.

DEATHS

BRADFIELD - John Morshead died peacefully in Oban Hospital on Thursday January 30th aged 73. Funeral St Columbas Church, Gruline, Isle of Mull, 11.30 am Tuesday February 4th. Memorial Service at Walhampton School, Lymington to be announced later. Family flowers only. Donations to St Columbas Church.

BRANCH - Frances Margaret, on Thursday, January 30th 1997, peacefully at home, aged 84. Much loved and missed by her many friends. Funeral Service at Golders Green Crematorium on Friday, February 7th, at 11.30 am. No flowers. Donations to Care for the Wild, 1 Ashfolds, Horsham Road, Rusper, West Sussex RH12 4QX.

CARLISLE - Audrey peacefully on 29th January. Will be sadly missed by daughters Tamsin, Julia, Daloni and Alison, and granddaughters Rosa and Georgia. Requiem Mass at All Saints, East Sheen Avenue, SW14, Thursday 6th February. No flowers. Donations to Princess Alice Hospice c/o F.W. Paine, 31 Church Street, Twickenham TW1 3NR.

COADY - On 28th January after a severe illness borne with great courage, Matthew Turner, journalist, much loved husband of Pat and dear father of Frances and Simon. Private cremation but Matthew's friends are invited to meet at the Methodist United Reformed Church, Hungate, Beccles, Suffolk on Friday 7th March at 11.30 am to remember him.

de PARAVICINI - On 28th January 1997, John Dodson aged 92 passed peacefully away, father of Tim and Francis, grandfather of Avalon and Nevin. Funeral, St Mary's, Abbotts Ann, Andover on Friday February 7th at 2 pm.

FFRENCH - On 29th January 1997, John Raymont Michael ffrench, MC (late 4/6 Rajputana Rifles and Royal Ulster Rifles) beloved husband of Georgina, dear father of Sally, James and Patrick, and grandfather of Liam, Erica, Sarah, Daniel and Mary Rose.

FITZGERALD - Edward Neil M.C. (Eamon) on 30th January, husband of the late Julie, father of Desmond and Patrick. Funeral Service Putney Vale Crematorium on Tuesday 4th February at 1.45 pm. No flowers but donations please to Age Concern, Kensington and Chelsea Branch, Young Street, London W8, in his memory.

HIGHTON - Cecil, Barrister and Civil Servant, died peacefully at St Joseph's Nursing Home, Littlehampton, on 25th January 1997, aged 90.

HUNTER - On 28th January, Jock (John Arnott) aged 90. Beloved father of David, Priscilla, Fiona and Laurie. Memorial February 10th at 3.30 pm at St Mathias, Church Road, Richmond. Family flowers only. Donations to Friends of the Elderly, 42 Ebury Street, SW1.

HURFORD - James David Kinahan Hurford MBE suddenly on 29th January 1997 aged 51 in hospital after a brave fight against cancer. Dearly loved husband of Kate, loving son of Joy and the late David Hurford. Greatly loved brother of Patricia and Caroline (Lulu). Much loved brother-in-law and uncle. Greatly missed by all his family and friends. Funeral Service 2 pm Wednesday 5th February at St Andrew's Church, Broughton, Kettering, followed by burial at Broughton Cemetery. Enquiries about flowers or donations to Jack Warwick Funeral Service, 2A Wallis Road, Kettering, NN15 6NX, (01536) 85635.

LANE - John Marwood Powlett, Director of CGR Advertising, died suddenly Monday 27th January 1997 in Kingston, Jamaica, West Indies. Funeral in Kingston Thursday 6th February 3.30pm Temple of Light. Sorely missed by friends and colleagues. UK Memorial to be organised. Tel: (0171) 221-7318.

LISSETT - On 30th January peacefully after a long illness Marjory, mother of Emma and Kate, widow of John reunited. Family flowers only please. Donations if desired to Guillain Barre Syndrome Support Group together with any enquiries to W. Bamford & Son Funeral Directors, 7 Shakespeare Street, Nottingham, NG1 4FR, tel: (0115) 9418429.

LLOYD - Lady Ruth, beloved wife of the late Lord Lloyd of Hampstead and devoted mother and grandmother to Naomi and Corinne and grandchildren Katie and Ben, passed away after a short illness on 29th January. Cremation to take place on Monday 3rd February at the West Chapel, Golders Green Crematorium at 2 pm.

MacKNIGHT - Rev. Angus T. On January 30th, 1997, The Rev. Angus T. MacKnight L.V.O., M.B.E., M.B., Ch.B., M.R.C.G.P., husband of Alice Laing, father of Jock and Jane, grandfather of Kate, Charlie and Calum. Late of Gordonstoun and Brussels. Service in St Boswells Church on Tuesday February 4th at 12.45 pm followed by cremation at Mortonhall Crematorium at 2.45 pm. Family flowers only. Donations if desired to Parkinsons Disease Society, 22 Upper Woburn Place, London, WC1H 0RA.

MATHESON - Donald. The funeral of Donald Matheson, who died suddenly at home, took place on January 29th in Brora, Sutherland. Beloved husband of the late Mary Gwendoline and much loved father, father-in-law, grandfather and brother.

MORCOM - On 29th January 1997, John Brian Morcom. Funeral Service at Harwood Park Crematorium, Watton Road, Stevenage, on Tuesday 11th February at 3.30 pm. Enquiries to W. Austin & Sons (Stevenage) Ltd, tel: (01438) 316622.

NEWBURY - Roy D.A. peacefully on 30th January 1997 at the Royal United Hospital, Bath, aged 82. Dearly loved husband of Yvonne, devoted father of Richard, John and Jenny and fond grandfather of Viola, Edward, Tancred, Arthur, Cressida and Billy. Funeral Service at Haycombe Crematorium, Bath, at 12.30pm on 5th February. Family flowers only. Donations if desired to the R.N.L.B. c/o Hooper & Son, 13 St James Parade, Bath.

SALLITT - Elaine 31st January 1997 peacefully at The Royal Sussex County Hospital, Brighton. Much loved mother of Timothy and Jilly. Private funeral.

SHEVLOFF - On 28th January, 1997, Tatiana Liakoff Shevloff. Wife of David Shevloff. Sadly missed by family and friends. Donations in her memory may be made to 'The R.S.P.C.A.', Causeway, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 1HG.

STENHOUSE - Marion Hamilton (Patty) peacefully at Brooklands Nursing Home, Forest Row, on 30th January 1997. Funeral on Wednesday 5th February at St Andrew's Church, Chardstock, Chard, Somerset at 2.30 pm.

STUART - David, late of Broome Court, Kew Gardens, Surrey. Funeral Service at Mortlake Crematorium at 10.30 am on Tuesday 4th February.

WEIR - Suddenly as the result of an accident, while working abroad, on 20th January 1997, Graham Weir aged 36 years. A dear son of Marion and the late James Weir, father of Charlotte and loved brother of Janice.

THANKSGIVING SERVICES

BURKE - Thanksgiving Services for the life of Mrs Elizabeth Burke will take place at St Mary's Church, Navan on Saturday 22nd March 1997 at 12 noon and at St Mary's Church, Kings Walden, Hertfordshire on Monday April 7th 1997 at 12 noon.

IN MEMORIAM — PRIVATE

GOODA - Sarah Jane Chaloner Gooda (née Reed). Fondly remembered on this 1st anniversary and always by her loving family.

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JEREMY MAAS

Jeremy Maas, art dealer, died of arteriosclerosis on January 23 aged 68. He was born on August 31, 1928.

In deciding to become a dealer in Victorian paintings, Jeremy Maas could hardly have found a more effective way of waging his personal campaign to bring Victorian painting, a neglected field of British art, back into favour. His career gave him the freedom of movement to write and mount exhibitions and his gallery became a meeting place and forum for discussion for those with memories stretching back to the 1960s and for newer converts to Victorian art. If, when Maas started out, Victorian painting was generally considered to be of negligible interest, by the end of his career it was re-established in public esteem and at the time of his death Maas was working on a long-held ambition: an exhibition of Victorian Fairy Paintings which opens at the Royal Academy later this year.

Born in Malaya to a Dutch diplomat father and an American mother, Jeremy Stephen Maas spent his youth up to the age of ten in Alpine resorts and fashionable European spas. He was brought to England to be sent to school at Sherborne before going on to Pembroke College, Oxford, to read English. While in the Bodleian he came across William Gaunt's *Aesthetic Adventure* which, he said, first kindled his interest in Victorian art.

In December 1960, having left Bonhams Auctioneers where he had started up the prints and drawings department, he opened the Maas Gallery in Clifford Street, off Bond Street. He ran it with his long-time colleague and friend Henry Ford. They shared a bawdy sense of humour of the seaside postcard variety and this became part of the gallery's flavour.

Within a year of opening, Maas was selling Victorian paintings to such major museums as the Ashmolean, the British Museum, the Tate Gallery, Manchester City Art Gallery and the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York. Many first came to the gallery to buy Norwich School watercolours — the basic stock that Maas had bought with his £2,000 initial capital — but later returned for Victorian works.

Early purchases by the American collector Paul Mellon of English watercolours and paintings by Gainsborough, Constable and Turner, helped to fund Maas's initial dealing in Pre-Raphaelite paintings. His 1961 exhibition of Pre-Raphaelite work was the first commercial exhibition of such paintings in modern times. For his first ten years of dealing Maas was one of a tiny number specialising in this field, and in Victorian art in general, but his success encouraged other dealers and salerooms to follow.

Maas had firm convictions about quality. He knew instinctively when a painting was "right", a skill, he said, which he learnt from looking at pictures with his mother when young. One of his triumphs was to buy *Flaming June* by Lord Leighton from another dealer in 1963 for £1,000. Unable to persuade an English gallery to acquire it, he sold it to the Puerto Rican collector Luis Ferré for £2,000. It still hangs in the museum in Ponce and, recognised as one of the great icons of Victorian painting, is now worth several million pounds.

Among other collectors to whom Maas sold over the years were Vincent Price, Osbert Lancaster, Barry Humphries, Hugh Casson, L. S. Lowry and Andrew Lloyd Webber.

Maas also represented living artists in his gallery, giving John Ward his first London exhibition. Ward, who became a friend, found Maas could be "brusquely unorthodox". He was, he said, "a dealer who believed in the quality of the picture and wouldn't attempt to sell anything if the person didn't understand and appreciate it".

Very tall (6ft 4in) and shambolically elegant, Maas had great presence. He could be forbidding to those he suspected of superficiality, but to those who proved themselves serious and who came to him for advice he was unstinting in his help. Late in life he admitted to friends that he had always been shy and found large social gatherings a trial. He was also colour-blind — though with a red/green deficiency only.

He published his first book, *Victorian Painters*, in 1969. As the first illustrated survey of that period in art history it was highly influential, and is still highly regarded. His enthusiasm was for personalities as much as paintings and further research into the Victorian artists and his growing collection of their photographic *cartes de visite* (published as *The Victorian Art World in Photographs* in 1984) provided an inexhaustible source of gossip about their most intimate lives. He took great pleasure in his friendships with some of the grandchildren of the Pre-Raphaelites, Diana Holman Hunt and Virginia Surtees among them. Other books were *Gambart, Prince of the Victorian Art World* (1975) and *Holman Hunt and The Light of the World* (1984).

Jeremy Maas married Antonia Armstrong Willis, equestrian and artist, in 1956. She survives him, together with their daughter and two sons. His eldest son, Rupert, who has worked with him in the gallery since 1984, is his successor in the business.

JOHN PATTERSON

John Patterson, founder of Dateline International, died of a heart attack on January 29 aged 51. He was born on May 17, 1945.

IT WAS in a Sixties climate, increasingly tolerant of casual sex and responsive to the technological advances of a computer age, that John Patterson founded Dateline, probably the largest, longest established and most successful computer dating service in the world. An astute entrepreneur, he was one of the first to realise that love was a commodity from which a comfortable profit could be made.

Every year, hundreds of single men and women would approach his company. For a fixed fee they could have a comprehensive profile of themselves and their ideal mate fed into a computer. There, exposed to the statistics and desires of thousands of other hopefuls, they waited to be matched up.

Estimates suggest that Dateline introduces some 40,000 prospective lovers a year. Some 2,000 of these go on to get married, though accurate figures are difficult to estimate. "They are just the ones we hear about," Patterson explained. "There are thousands who do not bother to tell us. There is still a stigma attached to using a dating agency."

But in the 30 years in which he ran the company, Patterson did his best to overcome this stigma as well as the criticisms that he simply made capital out of exploiting loneliness. Though he did not meet his own wife through the agency, he believed, he said, wholeheartedly in computer dating.

John Patterson was born into a respectable middle-class family, the son of a banker in Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire. His father expected his son to go on, after private education, to pursue a conventional profession. But when John graduated from the University of London in 1966 with a third-class degree in mechanical engineering, he had little idea of what he wanted to do next.

It was a visit to Harvard University which made up his mind. He noticed that a computer was being used, with notable success, to match partners up at the freshman's ball. As a young man Patterson was himself shy of girls, reluctant to introduce himself for fear of being misconstrued and, like many others, finding urban life solitary and insular. He returned to Britain determined to set up a small agency of his own, to provide a fun and light-hearted opportunity for strangers to meet.

Dateline was launched that same year on £50 of borrowed capital. Leaflets were printed and distributed around various educational establishments. Patterson began by charging £1 a time. Soon distribution was spreading to Piccadilly and Oxford Circus and a small office was established in Kensington's Abingdon Road. By the early 1970s the first full display advertisements for a dating agency were appearing in newspapers, magazines and hoardings. People gradually came to believe that the couples who beamed so contentedly in the pictures were for real. If Patterson had once seen his company merely as a short-term project — something to occupy himself for six months while he considered what else to do — he now found himself heading a burgeoning and highly profitable business.

A monthly magazine, *Singles*, was distributed all over Britain and a travel company, Singles Holidays, was launched in 1975. It was to operate for more than ten years. There was also a singles bar in Buckingham Palace Road. In 1978 Patterson branched out even more ambitiously, launching Dateline in France, Germany and Italy. But he could not make the expansion pay and in 1982 he withdrew his offices from these countries.

But the dating data-bank remained, his most successful venture, outlasting a plethora of other such agencies which sprang up. In 1992 it moved its headquarters to Bletchingdon Park, an Oxfordshire country house, and there it still thrives.

On the proceeds of his business success Patterson bought a plane. He had taken to flying in 1972 and progressed rapidly from single-engined to twin-engined aircraft. He loved to jaunt around the world, and made two adventurous trips, also, to Antarctica with his friend, the explorer Giles Kershaw.

Patterson's other passion was wine. He purchased the Hambledon Vineyard in Hampshire and was one of the first to try to promote English wines. A warm, genial character, with a quick wit and distinctive turn of phrase, he liked nothing more after a day in the office than to invite his staff to his wine bar for a drink.

Patterson is survived by a son and two daughters from his marriage to Valerie and by two sons from a second long standing relationship.

JOSE IGNACIO DOMECQ

José Ignacio Domecq, Spanish winemaker, died on January 15 aged 82. He was born in Jerez de la Frontera on July 31, *1914*.

FETED throughout the world of wine as La nariz, or "The Nose", José Ignacio Domecq would, by his own admission, rather have been a dashing naval officer in the modern Spanish Armada than the sherry-maker of the century. But the proclamation of the Second Spanish Republic in 1931 led not only to the flight from his realm of King Alfonso XIII, but resulted also in the immediate closure of all Spain's military academies. The 17-year-old Domecq, a naval cadet obsessed with the sea, saw his hoped-for career snatched rudely from him. The rest of his education, to his great dismay, had to be pursued instead at an engineering school.

Years later, even in his seventies, he would remark that he might well have made it to admiral's rank had Spain's fortunes taken a different turn. Although this observation was always sardonically made, it never failed to reveal a subtle flavour of regret.

Yet his personal loss — and, perhaps the navy's too — was an immeasurable gain for drinkers around the world. Born into the leading sherry family of Andalusia, José Ignacio Domeque y González was the son of Manúel Domecq y Núñez de Villavicencio. He was quickly put in charge of production at the family *bodega*, making and blending the finest sherries, and serving at the same time as roving ambassador for the family's wines.

Domecq married into a sherry family, too — the Bobadillas. A hearty man, he was a superb polo player, boasting a handicap of five until well into his sixties. In this hobby, as with his winemaking, he had certain inherited advantages: the Domecq family polo ground, called La Ina, was perhaps the finest in Europe, outside Britain. Manly sport on horseback, however, took its toll and he was seldom without a broken bone somewhere.

Apart from polo, Domecq was a man of simple tastes. He spurned the family's majestic villa in the centre of Jerez de la Frontera, his home town, for a smaller apartment he shared with his wife. A bright red motorcycle — purchased, apparently, from one of his chauffeurs — was his preferred mode of transport, and local Jerezanos grew accustomed to the sight of him whizzing through town on his way to work every morning. Paco, an even-tempered Jack Russell, was his constant companion, travelling in a box on the back seat especially made for him.

If there was one other thing that Domecq regretted, apart from his aborted naval career, it was the fact that sherry has always remained an underpriced drink. "There are few wines more complex than sherry," he would often remark, in between puffs of a cigarette, "yet even in Spain a bottle of average rioja costs more than the finest fino."

But his tireless efforts to promote sherry, particularly on its "home ground" in England, did not go unrecognised. In 1991, *Decanter* magazine made him its Man of the Year. A year earlier, the municipal council of Jerez de la Frontera had declared him to be the town's *Hijo Predilecto*, or "favourite son". Movingly, the Spanish Navy, in 1984, awarded him an honorary Cruz del Mérito.

He is survived by his wife, Angela Fernández de Bobadilla, and his 12 children.

RICHARD BERRY

Richard Berry, rhythm and blues singer and songwriter, died in Los Angeles on January 23 aged 61. He was born in Extension, Louisiana, on April 11, 1935.

IT IS unlikely that the 21-year-old Richard Berry gave much thought to the self-composed, Jamaican-flavoured song *Louie Louie* he recorded as the B-side to a version of *You Are My Sunshine* in Hollywood in January 1957. Yet the song went on to become a rock anthem and one of the most covered songs of the whole rock era.

Although *Louie Louie* was only to earn Berry and his backing group a moderate reputation on America's Pacific coast, in 1960 a white singer, Rockin' Robin Roberts, discovered the disc in a bargain bin and cut it the following year giving it a more rock'n'roll treatment. Its popularity spread to America's North-West. By 1963 two rival bands in Portland, Oregon, featured the song in their live sets and, recorded by the Kingsmen, it became a massive national hit. Berry's original version of the song was issued on an EP in Britain, disappeared without trace, and now sells for £125 a copy.

Rumours that the song's lyrics were obscene began to circulate and led to its ban in one state and an investigation by the FBI. They played the record at 33, 45 and 78 rpm, to try to decipher what was being sung. Berry was also called in and questioned about his lyrics. The FBI's conclusion was that the song was "unintelligible at any speed".

By now the song had taken on a life of its own with more than a 1,000 versions being recorded to date, by such well known artists as Blondie, Barry White, the Turtles and the Beach Boys. Only *Yesterday* by the Beatles has had more cover versions. In 1985, there was even a bid to get the Washington State legislature to adopt it as the official state song.

Unfortunately, Berry had signed over his songs, including *Louie Louie*, years before for $650. "I was flattered when it became a hit," Berry told an interviewer, "but then I got bitter about it. Here was I the writer, but all those millions of dollars went into someone else's pocket."

Richard Berry, born near New Orleans, had moved to Los Angeles to live with an aunt while still an infant. While a student at Jefferson High School in the early 1950s he formed a vocal group with fellow students and went on to find fame in the burgeoning West Coast rhythm and blues scene with a group called the Flairs, as well as supplying the menacing narration for *Riot in Cell Block No 9*, a big hit for the Robins in 1955.

Signed for the Los Angeles-based Modern label, Berry, who could sing every group part from tenor to bass, recorded extensively as a solo singer and with a female backing group called the Dreamers. Many of these tracks were reissued to great acclaim on an album entitled *Get Out of the Car*, released in Britain in 1992.

After his tenure at Flip records and the sale of his copyrights, Berry went from one small label to another without finding the success he deserved. However, when the copyright of *Louie Louie* came up for renewal in 1986, Berry was able to recover 75 per cent of the songwriting royalties and 50 per cent of the publishing royalties, guaranteeing him a sizeable annual income. He came over to Britain last year when a radio interview with Paul Jones on Jazz FM showed that any bitterness there might have been had long since gone.

Berry is survived by his former wife, Dorothy, a recording artist in her own right, and two daughters and two sons.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

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British Limbless Ex-Servicemen's Association,

185 High Road, Chadwell Heath, Essex RM6 6NA.

Charity Reg No. [illegible]

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Donations to: [illegible] ANIMAL WELFARE TRUST, [illegible] (Reg Charity No [illegible])

LEGAL NOTICES

TWINNS LEISURE FURNITURE LIMITED (IN ADMINISTRATIVE RECEIVERSHIP)

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

A meeting of the creditors of Twinns Leisure Furniture Limited is to be held at Price Waterhouse The Quay, 30 Channel Way, Ocean Village, Southampton, SO14 3QG on 11 February 1997 at 10.30am under the provisions of Section 48 of the Insolvency Act 1986. The purpose of this meeting is to receive the report of the receivers and if the creditors wish to do so, to appoint a committee of creditors.

Creditors who have not received notice of the meeting and wish to attend should contact the receivers' office (telephone number 01703 835107) and ask for Paul Hammond.

[illegible]

LEGAL NOTICES

No. 00276 of 1997

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE

CHANCERY DIVISION

COMPANIES COURT

IN THE MATTER OF OMI INTERNATIONAL PLC

AND IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 1985

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a petition was on Thursday 16 January 1997 presented to Her Majesty's High Court of Justice for the confirmation of the reduction of the Share Premium Account by £29,938,000 of the above-named Company.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that the said Petition is directed to be heard before the Registrar of the Companies Court at the Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, London WC2A 2LL on Wednesday, 12 February 1997.

ANY Creditor or Shareholder of the said Company desiring to oppose the making of an Order for the confirmation of the said reduction of the Share Premium Account should appear at the time of the hearing in person or by Counsel for the purpose.

A copy of the said Petition will be furnished to any such person requiring the same by the undermentioned Solicitors on payment of the regulated charge for the same.

DATED this 30th day of January 1997

LOVELL WHITE DURRANT

65 Holborn Viaduct, London, EC1A 2DY

Solicitors for the above-named Company

PUBLIC NOTICES

BETTINSON, BERTHE MARIE CLAIRE of 3 Ballantine Street, Wandsworth, London, SW18 died on 18 November 1996 particulars to H.C.L. HANNE & CO Solicitors of St. JOHN'S CHAMBERS, 1C ST.JOHN'S HILL, LONDON, SW11 1TN before 2 April 1997

CHARITY COMMISSION

Charity: Regimental and Battalion Charities of the Grenadier Guards.

Scheme for regulating the charity.

Reference: RM/538/SC.

The Charity Commissioners have made a Scheme for this charity. A copy can be seen for the next month at Regimental Headquarters Grenadier Guards, Wellington Barracks, London SW1E 6HQ or a copy can be obtained by sending a stamped addressed envelope to The Charity Commission, Woodfield House, Tangier, Taunton, Somerset TA1 4BL, quoting the reference above.

STEVEN, JANE GRANT of Pinchill House Nursing Home, Pinchill, Salford Priors, Evesham, Worcs died on 2 January 1997 particulars to The Executor, Midland Bank Trust Company Limited, Probate Operations, 2nd Floor, Deacon House, 192 Eyre Street, Sheffield S1 3RG before 2 April 1997

HUNTLY, DONALD ROWLEY SPIERS of The Old Rectory, The Glebe, Ewhurst, Cranleigh, Surrey GU6 7PX died on 5 January 1997 particulars to ATKINS WILSON & BELL Solicitors of BRAEMAR, 3 JENNER ROAD, GUILDFORD, SURREY GU1 3AQ (Ref: Charles H Pfister) before 2 April 1997

LEGAL, PUBLIC, COMPANY & PARLIAMENTARY NOTICES

TO PLACE NOTICES FOR THIS SECTION PLEASE TELEPHONE

0171-782 7344

OR

FAX: 0171-782 7827

[illegible]

ON THIS DAY

February 1, 1902

A closing stage in the Boer War which ended with the Peace of Vereeniging on May 31. British casualties were 5,774 killed and 16,000 deaths from disease.

LATEST INTELLIGENCE.
THE WAR.
FURTHER CAPTURES OF BOERS.

The following telegram from Lord Kitchener has been received at the War Office:-

Pretoria, Jan. 30, 8 15 p.m.

French reports 26 Boers taken prisoners, one killed, to north-east of Cape Colony, belonging to Fouché's commando, which is now completely scattered.

Colonel Du Moulin, at Abraham's Kraal, on Riet River, was attacked 1 a.m., 28th January, by Nieuwhoudt's commando. After severe fighting Boers were repulsed with loss, but I regret to report the death of Du Moulin, a promising young commander, who has done excellent service throughout the campaign.

Major Driscoll on 27th captured small Boer laager with 17 prisoners, including Field Cornets Venter and Grobelaar, near Makaw's Drift: latter has died of wounds. Driscoll is now moving to co-operate against Boers who attacked Du Moulin's camp.

[The above appeared in our Second Edition of yesterday.]

THE TRANSVAAL.

Standerton, Jan. 20.

The success of General Bruce Hamilton's operations last month is likely to be equalled this month. He has up to the present during January made overn 330 captures in addition to killed, wounded, and surrenders. Among his captures are many important men, including most of the officers of the Staats Artillerie. The Boers east of the line under Botha's control are very uneasy in consequence of the succession of night marches by the British.

Horse sickness, which was previously unknown in this district, is prevalent here. It is also reported to have appeared among the Boers' horses.

Johannesburg, Jan. 30.

Everything is very quiet in the south and west of the Transvaal. Steenkamp is in the Rustenburg district with his commando, but manifests little disposition to show himself. A prisoner who was recently taken states that horse sickness is seriously affecting the mobility of the Boers, and confirms the statement of another Boer, who was taken some weeks ago, that ammunition is scarce. The Magaliesberg range is free of the enemy.

CAPE COLONY.

Graaf Reinet, Jan. 28.

Wessel's commando, after harbouring in the Richmond and Murraysburg district, failed to cross the line west of Murraysburg, and was forced on the 24th inst. to leave its haunts by a British column, and chased to Bethesda Road station. After some looting the Boers fled eastward to Wagenpameberg, where they laagered on the 25th, having covered upwards of 50 miles. On Friday night the District Mounted Rifles came in contact with the enemy at Bethesda, and continued the pursuit. The rebel Smit, who escaped from the mounted troops a few weeks ago, led the Boers into the Petersburg mountains, where Lotter was run to earth.

هكذا من الاصل

هكذا من الأصل

THE TIMES TODAY

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 1 1997

NEWS

TV merger creates 30 new channels

■ Three of Britain's biggest commercial television companies yesterday joined forces to launch a £300 million bid to run digital television and bring up to 30 extra channels within 18 months. The new technology will bring multi-channel television to the three quarters of British households which do not already subscribe to cable or satellite television.................... **Pages 1, 7,30**

Major wants to share prosperity

■ John Major announced proposals to give people a bigger stake in Britain's prosperity through an expansion of share ownership and personal pensions. He also used a press conference to reveal "Sharematch", a scheme to encourage businesses to offer free shares to more of their staff.........**Page 1**

Gucci murder charge

The former wife of Maurizio Gucci, the last family member to hold shares in the fashion company, was charged with ordering his murder .... **Page 1**

Meteoric Messenger

Melinda Messenger, 22, has become an overnight modelling sensation after appearing in *The Sun* and the *Daily Star*............ **Page 3**

Shark on danger list

Rare species including the basking shark, the stag beetle and the sandy stilt puffball are to receive greater protection .... **Page 8**

Better reading

Reading standards of inner-city children have been improved by giving them executive-style computer notebooks................. **Page 11**

Bishop's dream

The Bishop of Sheffield has written a "dream Queen's Speech" quoting Karl Marx. A Tory MP said it was outrageous..... **Page 14**

Nazi claim

Michel Junot, an aide of President Chirac's who served under the Vichy regime sent Jews to the Nazi gas chambers in 1942, a French magazine claimed ....**Page 15**

CIA man in trouble

Anthony Lake, nominated by the President as head of the Central Intelligence Agency, faces objections from senators .... **Page 16**

ANC accused

ANC operatives had a hand in the 1993 assassination of Chris Hani, a popular party leader, it was alleged .... **Page 17**

Search condemned

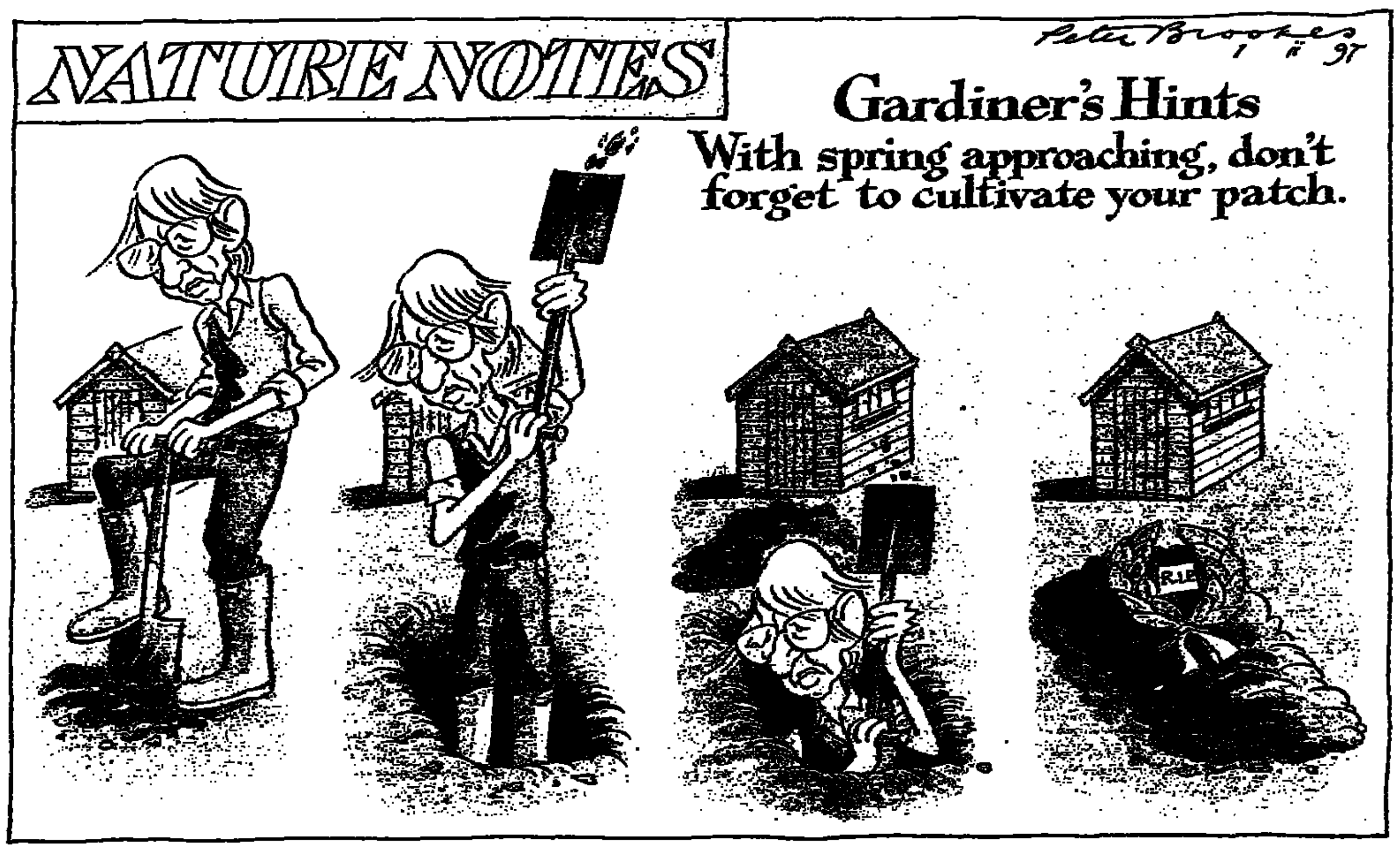
Brazilian anthropologists condemned an American scientist's jungle expedition to search for his Yanomami wife .... **Page 18**

Cure for Yeltsin

A Moscow spiritual healer who treated Leonid Brezhnev thinks that she can help Boris Yeltsin to make a full recovery .... **Page 19**

Ben Jonson as a copywriter

■ A lost playlet by Ben Jonson which was commissioned to celebrate and advertise the opening of a shopping arcade in the Strand in 1609 has been found in the Public Record Office. The site of the arcade, the Harvey Nichols of its day, is now occupied by several shops, including a branch of Pizza Hut... **Pages 5, 23**


NATURE NOTES
Peter Brookes 1 ii 97
Gardiner's Hints
With spring approaching, don't forget to cultivate your patch.

OPINION

Yeltsin and Brezhnev: When Russians get used to the idea of managing without a "guiding star" their democracy will truly come of age......**Page 23**

Green and swampy: Professional protesters trespass on the rights of local people to decide how green should be their valleys.............. **Page 23**

Playwrights as copywriters: Advertising copy is the same medium as used by Shakespeare and Ben Jonson, Pinter and Beckett.......... **Page 23**

LETTERS

Gibraltar; Toyota ..... **Page 23**

COLUMNS

Simon Jenkins: "My problem," wrote the fisherman who had used his wife's pubic hair, "is not so much that I have run out of raw materials but what to call this superb new fly." Suggestions included Lunar Rise, Frizzie Lizzy, Throat Tickler and Old Wives' Tail .... **Page 22**

OBITUARIES

Jeremy Maas, art dealer; **John Patterson**, founder of the Dateline agency; **José Ignacio Domecq**, sherry producer; **Richard Berry**, songwriter................ **Page 25**

BUSINESS

Abbey National: Scottish Amicable rejected a bid from Abbey National worth up to £1.4 billion .... **Page 27**

Books: Reed Elsevier sold some of publishing's best-known names .... **Page 27**

Economy: Kenneth Clarke indicated that he remains opposed to Bank demands to raise base rates......... **Page 27**

Markets: The FT-SE 100 index closed 47.4 points up at 4275.8. Sterling's trade-weighted index fell from 95.2 to 94.4 — from $1.6145 to $1.6027 and from DM2.6463 to DM2.6233 .... **Page 30**

SPORT

Rugby union: England must produce evidence of improvement in the Calcutta Cup match against Scotland at Twickenham .... **Page 52**

Cricket: England, 107 all out against New Zealand A, conceded a first-innings lead of 74 runs...................... **Page 52**

Football: The way Andrei Kanchelskis slipped away to Italy catches the transience of the times.................... **Page 46**

CAR 97

In-car entertainment; the last Lagonda; Labour Party's traffic policy

ARTS

Old Vic epic: Timothy and Samuel West take the central roles of Falstaff and Hal in *Henry IV Parts 1 and 2*.................. **Page 20**

Many happy returns: Harold Pinter's first play, *The Birthday Party*, in a faithfully sinister Manchester revival .... **Page 20**

Silent movies: I support multiplexes for one good reason: the alternative trend towards high-tech "home entertainment" is even more depressing — Richard Morrison on our cinemas............... **Page 21**

SECTIONS

MAGAZINE

Heavenly creature: Kate Winslet .... **Page 8**
Big bang: Manchester after the bomb..... **Page 16**
Food: look East... **Page 43**

Weekend

Roaring Forties: Women's mid-life crisis..... **Pages 1,2**

Property: Storage; retirement homes....... **Pages 7-9**
Home life: A curfew for teenagers .... **Page 13**

10 15

Get karting: quick kids
PLUS win a drive in the 1015 Grand Prix
Trip to the top: The Bard

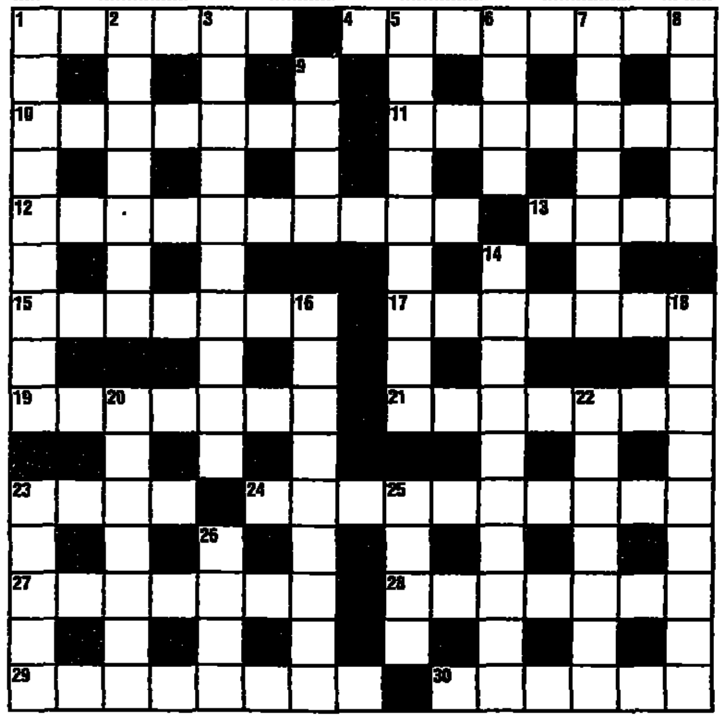
directory

People .... **Page 3**
Food......................... **Page 5**
Books .... **Pages 7-12**
What's on .... **Pages 13-21**
TV & radio ...... **Pages 23-51**

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,392

A £20 book token will be awarded to the senders of the first five correct solutions opened next Thursday. Entries should be addressed to: The Times, Saturday Crossword Competition, PO Box 486, Virginia Street, London E1 9DD. The names of the winners and the solution will be published next Saturday.

Name/Address ....



ACROSS

1 Duck head behind middle of pedestal (6).
4 Preserve, excellent preserve, from Kingston, possibly (8).
10 Inspire soldiers to swim around (7).
11 Sovereign occupying 19 houses in a row (7).
12 Gung-ho gunners encircle African republic (6,2,2).
13 Delay a guy (4).
15 Supplements showing how to make gag crazy? (7).
17 Fruit and lots of cereal put in a pan (7).
19 Dash! Coupons rendered invalid (7).
21 Fish got cut (7).
23 Communist reported in German capital (4).
24 Return flight is secret (10).
27 Possible diet of Italian opera violinist needs (7).
28 Jack is among hard-liners backing flier (7).
29 Monsieur leaves museum a legacy (8).
30 A very handsome youth – and so I flourished (6).

DOWN

1 Don't allow artists in German town to show up (9).
2 Minded about the French being exonerated (7).
3 Pretend to be an impresario (3,2,2,3).
5 Does it require deciphering from a GP author? (9).
6 Half of what Robin Hood was involved in appears crooked (4).
7 Coach – it crashes, out of control (7).
8 In legend, by ignoring the odds, become poor (5).
9 Hide tear (4).
14 One way to get purchase – standing on spade, perhaps (6,4).
16 Strengthening girl, a swimmer (9).
18 Catches fish to support some, but not others (4,5).
20 In old city, pruned shrub back towards source (7).
22 There's nothing to restrict the view (7).
23 Slough has army hospital right in the middle (5).
25 Knight is buried inside ancient tomb (4).
26 Vessel's left harbour (4).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,386

SQUALL CADUCEUS
U L A R E A N
NOMANSLAND NUDE
T B S D U O E
MALARIAL CANARD
S E E T W
ABUT OLEANDER
R E A F D E N
CARRYCOT CITE
I T H D E
INDIGO EMULSIFY
W N F D F S O
GALA GREYFRIARS
S N O E E T C
SHEEPDIP RHYMER

Solution to Puzzle No 20,391

SIDECAR JUPITER
U A O I E O E O
BANDWAGON MAXIM
T D S O N P A A
LEECH LAYPERSON
Y L E E I C
INDETERMINATE
G O T E L R
LANCECORPORAL
A L O I S B
SLAUGHTER PIQUE
S R R W T P U H
JUICE INANIMATE
A E C S G N R L
WALKOUT EGGHEAD

LAST WEEK'S WINNERS: J Crundwell, Croydon, Surrey; R Parry-Morris, Maidenhead, Berkshire; N G D Robinson, Deanhill Court, London; M A Williamson, Taunton, Somerset; C Don, Market Overton, Rutland.

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HOURS OF DARKNESS

TODAY

Sun rises: 7 39 am
Sun sets: 4 50 pm
Moon sets 11.16 am
Moon rises 1.17 am

New moon February 7

London 4 50 pm to 7 37 am
Bristol 5.00 pm to 7.47 am
Edinburgh 4 46 pm to 8 06 am
Manchester 4 52 pm to 7 52 am
Penzance 5 16 pm to 7 55 am

TOMORROW

Sun rises: 7 37 am
Sun sets: 4 52 pm
Moon sets 11.54 am
Moon rises 2.24 pm

New moon February 7

London 4.52 pm to 7 36 am
Bristol 5 02 pm to 7 45 am
Edinburgh 4 48 pm to 8 04 am
Manchester 4 54 pm to 7 51 am
Penzance 5 18 pm to 7 53 am

HIGH TIDES

London Bridge	06 45	6 0	19 22	6 1
Aberdeen	06 55	3 5	19 16	3 6
Avonmouth	—	—	12 07	10 5
Belfast	04 21	3 0	16 53	3 1
Cardiff	11 53	9 8	—	—
Devonport	10 38	4 6	23 20	4 4
Dover	03 57	5 8	18 31	5 5
Dublin (N Wall)	05 15	3 3	17 51	3 4
Falmouth	10 09	4 4	22 51	4 2
Greenock	05 50	2 8	17 52	3 0
Harwich	04 49	3 4	17 27	3 3
Holyhead	03 39	4.6	16 02	4 6
Hull (Albert D)	11 42	7 3	—	—
Ilfracombe	11 09	7 3	23 48	7.0
King's Lynn	11 41	5 1	—	—
Leith	08 13	4 6	20 33	4 5
Liverpool	04 18	7 7	16 2	7 7
Lowestoft	02 33	2 3	15 30	2 1
Margate	05.00	4 1	17 42	4 0
Milford Haven	11 29	5 5	—	—
Newquay	10 29	5 6	23 08	5 4
Oban	10 55	3 1	—	—
Penzance	09 51	4 5	22 32	4 4
Portland	11 52	1 5	—	—
Portsmouth	04 32	4 0	17 00	3 8
Shoreham	04 03	5 1	16 37	4 8
Southampton	03 51	3 9	16 15	3 7
Swansea	11 36	7 5	—	—
Tees	09 24	4 3	21 45	4 3
Walton-on-N	04 46	3.6	17.25	3.4

Crown copyright reserved All tide times are GMT

HIGHEST & LOWEST

Yesterday: Highest day temp: Aultbea, Highland, 10C (50F); lowest day max: Strath Allan, Perth & Kinross, 01C (34F); highest rainfall: Cape Wrath, Highland, 0 08in; highest sunshine: Tiree, Inner Hebrides, 7 6hr

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING
Recycled paper made up 41.2% of the raw material for UK newspapers in the first half of 1996

FORECAST

☐ **General:** England and Wales should start dry, with some brightness in the north and east at first. Outbreaks of rain already over the southwest and South Wales should spread north and east to reach all but extreme eastern parts by evening. Eastern Scotland should start dry and bright, but thickening cloud will bring outbreaks of rain to all Northern Ireland and Scotland by evening.

☐ **London, SE & E England, E Anglia:** mostly dry, bright at first. Wind light to moderate mainly easterly. Max temp 06C (43F).

☐ **Central S, Central N & NE England, Midlands, Channel Isles, Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, Central Highlands:** dry and bright at first, patchy rain later. Wind southeasterly light to moderate. Max temp 06C (43F).

☐ **SW England, S Wales, Northern Ireland:** mainly cloudy with rain at times. Some bright spells in places later. Winds south to southeast moderate to fresh becoming south to southwest later. Max temp 08C (46F).

☐ **N Wales, NW England, Lake District, Isle of Man, SW Scotland, Glasgow:** cloudy with outbreaks of rain, turning to sleet over higher ground. Wind mainly south to southeast moderate to fresh. Max temp 06C (43F).

☐ **Moray Firth, NE Scotland, Orkney, Shetland:** dry and bright at first, drizzle later. Wind south to southeast fresh to strong. Max temp 05C (41F).

☐ **Argyll, NW Scotland:** cloudy with outbreaks of rain, turning to sleet over high ground. Wind mainly south to southeast fresh to strong, locally near gale. Max temp 07C (45F).

☐ **Outlook:** a band of rain will cross all parts, followed by brighter weather.

AROUND BRITAIN

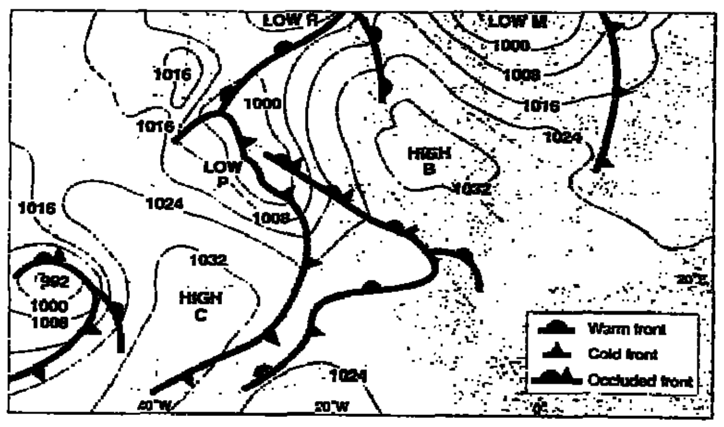
24 hrs to 5 pm: b=bright; c=cloud; d=drizzle; ds=dust storm; du=dull; f=fair; fg=fog; g=gale; h=hail; r=rain; sh=shower; sl=sleet; sn=snow; s=sun; t=thunder

	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	Max F			Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	Max F	
Aberdeen	-	0 02	6	43	c	Littlehmptn	-	-	5	41	c
Anglesey	6.1	-	7	45	s	London	0.1	-	6	43	c
Aspatria	7.3	-	8	46	s	Lowestoft	-	0.01	5	41	d
Aviemore	0 6	0 01	3	37	r	Manchester	4.6	-	7	45	s
Belfast	1 5	-	5	41	c	Margate	3 0	-	6	43	s
Birmingham	0 1	-	6	43	c	Minehead	-	-	3	37	c
Bognor R	-	-	5	41	du	Morecambe	2.6	-	7	45	b
Bournem'th	-	-	4	39	du	Newcastle	-	0 01	6	43	d
Bristol	-	-	5	41	du	Newquay	4 6	-	7	45	b
Buxton	1 3	-	4	39	b	Norwich	0.5	0.01	6	43	du
Cardiff	-	-	4	39	c	Oxford	-	-	4	39	du
Clacton	X					Penzance	X	-	7	45	b
Cromer	-	0 01	4	39	fg	Poole	-	-	5	41	c
Dunbar	X					Prestatyn	X	-	5	41	b
Eastbourne	-	-	5	41	c	Ross-o-wye	-	-	4	39	du
Edinburgh	0.2	0 01	3	37	d	Salcombe	X				
Eskdalemuir	2 6	-	4	39	s	Sandown	-	-	5	41	c
Exmouth	-	-	4	39	du	Saunton Snd	-	-	4	39	du
Falmouth	-	-	5	41	du	Scarboro'	0.2	-	6	43	du
Fishguard	7 5	-	5	41	s	Shanklin	-	-	4	39	c
Folkestone	1 9	-	5	41	b	Shrewsbury	-	-	5	41	c
Glasgow	4 3	0 01	7	45	b	Skegness	X				
Guernsey	0.1	-	4	39	du	Southport	-	-	7	45	du
Hastings	-	-	5	41	c	Southsea	X				
Hayling I.	-	-	5	41	c	Stornoway	1.2	-	9	48	b
Herne Bay	2 6	-	5	41	b	Swanage	-	-	5	41	c
Hove	-	X	5	41	du	Teignmouth	-	-	5	41	c
Hunstanton	X	0.01	4	39	fg	Tenby	-	-	5	41	c
Isle of Man	4 0	-	6	43	s	Tiree	7.6	-	8	46	s
Jersey	2.9	-	3	37	b	Torquay	-	-	5	41	c
Kinloss	0 7	0 01	6	43	c	Tynemouth	X				
Leeds	-	-	5	41	c	Ventnor	-	-	4	39	du
Lerwick	6 0	0 01	3	37	s	West-s-mare	-	-	5	41	du
Leuchars	-	0 02	5	41	d	Weymouth	-	-	5	41	c

ABROAD

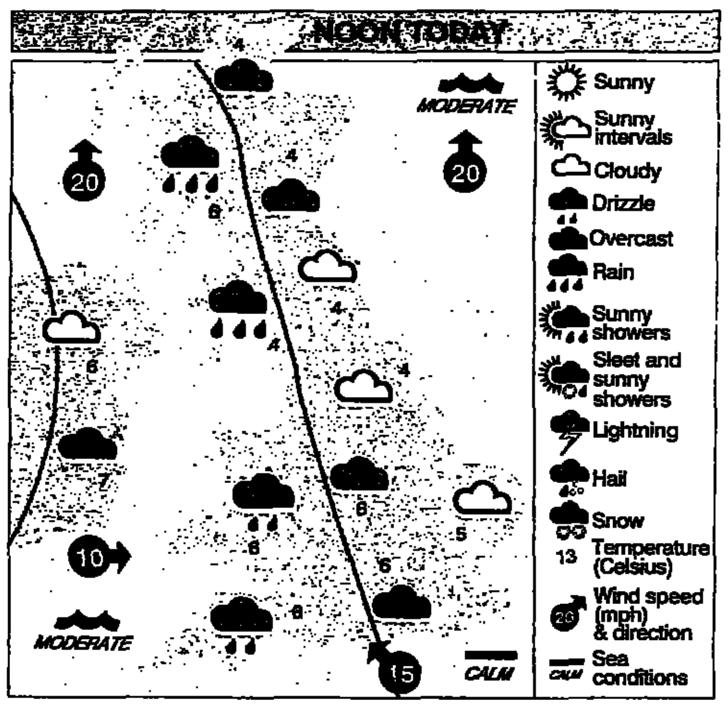
Ajaccio	13	55	s	Corfu	13	55	s	Majorca	17	63	f	Rome	12	54	s
Akrotiri	10	50	r	C'phegn	4	39	c	Malaga	16	61	f	S Fr'sco	9	48	f
Alex'dria	17	63	c	Dublin	5	41	c	Malta	16	61	s	S Paulo	30	86	c
Algiers	18	64	f	Dubrovnik	11	52	s	Melb'rne	22	72	s	Salzburg	0	32	c
Amst'dm	4	39	c	Faro	17	63	f	Mexico C	17	63	s	Santiago	31	88	s
Athens	8	46	f	Florence	14	57	s	Miami	27	81	s	Seoul	1	34	s
B Aires	30	86	s	Frankfurt	2	36	c	Milan	7	45	s	Sing'por	32	90	f
Bahrain	17	63	s	Funchal	20	68	s	Montreal	-20	-4	s	St'kholm	3	37	s
Bangkok	33	91	f	Geneva	2	36	c	Moscow	-14	7	s	Strasb'rg	3	37	s
Barbados	28	82	s	Gibraltar	16	61	f	Munich	-1	30	c	Sydney	20	68	r
Barcelona	12	54	s	Helsinki	3	37	f	N Delhi	19	66	s	Tangier	19	66	s
Beirut	17	63	f	Hong K	21	70	f	N York	-3	27	s	Tel Aviv	15	59	f
Belgrade	0	32	c	Innsbrck	3	37	s	Nairobi	29	84	s	Tenerife	24	75	s
Berlin	3	37	r	Istanbul	6	43	f	Naples	13	55	c	Tokyo	7	45	s
Bermuda	18	64	c	Jeddah	25	77	s	Nice	13	55	s	Toronto	-9	16	sn
Biarritz	16	61	s	Jo'burg	27	81	f	Oslo	-2	28	s	Tunis	14	57	f
Borde'x	12	54	s	L Angels	X			Paris	1	34	c	Valencia	13	55	c
Brussels	3	37	c	L Palmas	22	72	f	Peking	2	36	s	Vanc'ver	11	52	f
Budapest	3	37	s	Le Tquet	3	37	f	Perth	28	82	s	Venice	7	45	s
Cairo	17	63	f	Lisbon	17	63	f	Prague	1	34	c	Vienna	2	36	c
Cape Tn	24	75	s	Locarno	6	43	s	Reykjavik	1	34	c	Warsaw	0	32	c
Ch'church	20	68	r	Luxembg	0	32	c	Rhodes	13	55	s	Wash'ton	X		
Chicago	-7	19	f	Luxor	19	66	s	Rio de J	34	93	s	Wel'ngton	17	63	X
Cologne	3	37	c	Madrid	11	52	f	Riyadh	19	66	s	Zurich	0	32	c

Temperatures at midday local time. X = not available



Changes to the chart above from noon: high B will move southeast and decline as low M moves southeast. Low R will move east and fill, while low P will move north and deepen. High C will move northeast

NOON TODAY



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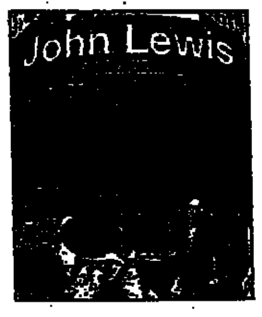

BUSINESS
John Lewis winning more of shoppers' pound
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WORKING WEEK
Bank manager who won't branch out
PAGE 29

SPORT
Can England keep their grip on the Calcutta Cup?
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THE HIDDEN ASSETS OF HAMMERSON
PAGE 29

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 1 1997

ScotAm rejects £1.1bn bid by Abbey National

By Robert Miller and Marianne Curphey

HOSTILITIES broke out yesterday after Abbey National confirmed that Scottish Amicable had rejected a cash or shares bid worth between £1.1 billion and £1.4 billion.

Talks between the two parties began a week ago, but broke off after the Scottish insurer rejected Abbey National's overtures as "too vague and imprecise".

Under the bid terms, Scottish Amicable's 1.1 million policyholders could make at least £400 each and possibly much more from the £400 million Abbey has set aside for them.

The Abbey bid, regarded as hostile, seems to offer the money immediately on the conclusion of the deal, with no strings attached. Abbey shares rose 15½p yesterday to 784½p.

Peter Birch, Abbey's chief executive, yesterday told *The Times*: "We don't want this to be a hostile bid. We are not awful people and I give you this pledge that no Scottish Amicable director will lose their seat on the board even if they oppose us." A similar promise was made, and kept, to Scottish Mutual directors when Abbey National acquired it in 1992.

Since Scottish Amicable unveiled its plans to shed its mutual status and seek a stock market flotation in three to five years' time, the insurer and its directors have been under heavy fire. Their proposals were said to be too complex and too favourable to the handful of directors who stood to make up to £1 million each.

The Abbey bid for Scottish Amicable bears all the hallmarks of the Abbey's successful £1.4 billion acquisition of the National & Provincial Building Society. In 1995, the society's board rejected a secret approach by Abbey National, which itself shed its mutual status to become a retail bank in 1989. The Abbey successfully appealed directly to N&P's 1.4 million borrowers and savers, who received average payouts of £1,300.

Analysts now believe there is little likelihood of Scottish Amicable remaining independent and that a bidding war has begun. Many large companies, including Prudential, Swiss Re, NatWest, and the continental insurers Generale, Allianz and Fortis are known to be looking for a purchase in the UK life industry.

Scottish Amicable said it had received "a number of calls" from potential partners after the news broke of the Abbey approach.

Both Prudential and NatWest declined to comment yesterday. However, Prudential is known to be keen to buy a mutual life insurer and is thought to have made overtures to Scottish Widows and Scottish Amicable, but was rebuffed.

Sandy Stewart, chairman of Scottish Amicable, said: "Since Abbey's approach became public we have had informal approaches, but nothing concrete and nothing that could be called a white knight."

The Scottish Amicable board has no specific legal requirement to put Abbey's terms to policyholders although the offer will get a brief mention in a circular being sent out within the next two weeks. Mr Stewart said: "It is up to Abbey National to expand on this offer. We have told them their offer is not sufficiently precise. We believe our proposals deliver value in the long term."

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ANDRÉ CAMARA

Peter Birch, Abbey chief executive, at his office in Baker Street, London, yesterday

Fidelity ban will hinder Pep push

By Robert Miller

FIDELITY Brokerage, the UK retail stockbroking arm of the world's largest fund manager, was yesterday ordered by a senior City watchdog to extend a ban on recruiting new clients for a further three months.

The Securities and Futures Authority (SFA), the regulator of brokers and futures dealers, which instigated the initial "no new clients" order last October, said that it would now take formal steps "to initiate disciplinary proceedings" against Fidelity Brokerage.

This could lead to a substantial fine in view of the size of the company, the number of clients who have had to be compensated and the length of time taken to sort it out.

The initial SFA ban was imposed after some of the firm's 30,000 clients complained to the watchdog over issues such as lost interest when dividend cheques were not credited to the proper account on time. Fidelity accepted then that it had "failed to resolve operational difficulties resulting from converting to a new computer system and increased volume of business". The SFA yesterday acknowledged that Fidelity had made "good progress", but said that it was "disappointed" that an end to the problems was still some way off.

The SFA ban will hit Fidelity at the busiest time of the fiscal year — the last-minute rush to beat the taxman and open Peps.

Phil West, marketing manager of Fidelity Brokerage, estimated that it had lost 300 to 400 clients since the problems emerged last year. He said that more staff had been recruited, and Ken Rathgeber, a senior figure in Fidelity's US operation, had been made acting president in the UK until the problems were resolved.

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Weekend Money Guide 1

Your Pension

BUSINESS TODAY

FTSE 100	4275.8	(+47.4)
Yield	3.62%	
FTSE All share	2087.61	(+19.45)
Nikkei	18330.01	(+465.97)
New York:		
Dow Jones	6865.42	(+41.58)*
S&P Composite	790.41	(+6.24)*
Federal Funds	5¼%*	(5⅝%)
Long Bond	96⅞*	(95⅞)
Yield	6.80%*	(6.87%)
3-mth Interbank	6⅞%	(6⅞%)
Liffe long gilt future (Mar)	110⅞	(110⅝)
New York:		
$	1.6023*	(1.6146)
London:		
$	1.6026	(1.6145)
DM	2.6244	(2.6488)
FFr	8.8581	(8.8330)
SFr	2.2807	(2.3005)
Yen	194.54	(196.54)
£ Index	94.4	(95.2)
London:		
DM	1.6360*	(1.6362)
FFr	5.5285*	(5.5445)
SFr	1.4220*	(1.4265)
Yen	121.27*	(122.18)
$ Index	102.0	(102.1)
Tokyo close Yen 122.12		
Brent 15-day (Apr)	$22.35	($22.60)
London close	$343.90	($347.35)

* denotes midday trading price

Full house

Berkeley, the housebuilder, gave an upbeat account of trading in as it sought to raise £33 million to buy more land. Berkeley said that since its first-half report, the market had continued to be strong over Christmas and in January.
Page 28, Tempus 30

Clarke dampens rate rise talk

From Janet Bush in Davos

KENNETH CLARKE, the Chancellor, yesterday indicated that he remains opposed to Bank of England demands to raise base rates.

Speaking at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, he said that his judgment that rates should remain unchanged had been reinforced since his December 11 meeting with Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England. The minutes of that meeting, published this week, showed that Mr George had pressed for a staged half-point rise, but that the Chancellor had disagreed.

Mr Clarke yesterday said that he had felt in December that an apparent acceleration in economic activity in November had not been followed through the next month and that subsequent data had confirmed this instinct. He cited recent surveys of retail sales by the British Retail Consortium and the Confederation of British Industry which pointed to a disappointing Christmas, a weak performance from manufacturing industry, some "spectacularly good" figures on cost pressures in industry and some strengthening of sterling.

He said after the January monetary meeting that the rise in sterling has been deflationary, in comments that explained the lack of a rate move then. He did not comment yesterday on more recent signs that the upward march in the pound's value may have faltered.

The Chancellor said that the difference of opinion between himself and Mr George in December had not been huge and that the bank had only been pushing for a quarter point on base rates and, in his words, "not pushing too hard". The next monetary meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday.

Pound falls back in profit-taking

By Alasdair Murray

THE POUND — which has risen by 14 per cent in the past five months — went into reverse yesterday as the market concluded that interest rates are not destined to rise next week.

The sterling trade weighted index closed down 0.8, at 94.4, its lowest point this year, as traders began a major sell-off. At one stage the pound slipped below $1.60, before staging a late recovery to close at $1.6027 — a fall of more than 1 cent. The pound also lost ground against the mark, ending the day down more than 2 pfennigs, at DM2.6233.

But the FT-SE 100 climbed 47.4 to a record high of 4,275.8, boosted by the Dow's rally in early New York trading.

Traders said the fall in sterling had been influenced by yesterday's report from the National Economic and Social Research Council, which concluded there is no need to raise base rates with sterling so strong. Martin Weale, one of the authors, is also a member of the Treasury advisory team.

The sell-off of sterling, which hit a four-year high of 2.7120 against the mark on January 22, is expected to continue as traders take profits on long positions. But a large fall, returning the pound to the levels of last summer, is considered unlikely as that would resurrect calls for interest rates to rise.

Yesterday, Howard Davies, Deputy Governor of the Bank of England, told the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, that the Bank has no firm view on the strength of sterling and is concentrating solely on the inflation target.

The Dow was up 43.87, at 6867.73, early yesterday after economists concluded from fourth-quarter GDP figures that American interest rates are unlikely to rise next week.

Reed sells famous-name publishers

By Eric Reguly

Townsend: Random-bound

REED ELSEVIER, the Anglo-Dutch communications group, yesterday sold some of the best-known names in book publishing, including William Heinemann, Secker & Warburg and Methuen, in a deal that effectively means it is withdrawing from adult book publishing.

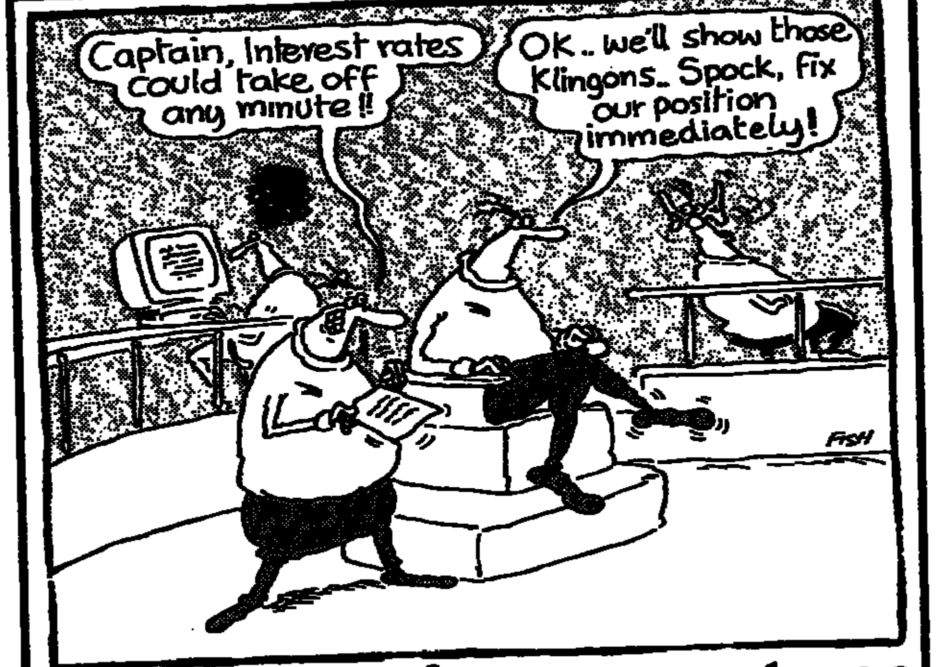
Random House, of New York, one of the world's largest trade publishers, bought the imprints for about $20 million, giving it a stable of prominent authors that includes Roddy Doyle, Umberto Eco, Graham Greene, George Orwell and Sue Townsend. Together the imprints accounted for 1 per cent or less of group profits.

Reed has been selling its consumer businesses to concentrate on professional publishing — in both hard copy and electronic form — in the legal, scientific and business markets. It bought Lexis-Nexis, one of the leading online publishers, and earlier this week purchased a group of American legal titles from Thomson Corp for $49 million.

Reed's trade book business now consists of the children's, illustrated and reference book divisions, which are on the auction block and are expected to find buyers this year. The titles include *Winnie the Pooh, Thomas the Tank Engine* and *The Animals of Farthing Wood.*

John Holloran, chief executive of Reed Books, said that Reed was the wrong size to extract any more value from the adult trade books: "The adult fiction market is polarised between very large companies able to take advantage of significant economies of scale and small specialisat businesses serving niche sectors."

Bank of Ireland Mortgages


Captain, Interest rates could take off any minute!!
Ok.. we'll show those Klingons.. Spock, fix our position immediately!
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fixed until March 2000
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The trend towards increased interest rates, together with a General Election fast approaching, means it could make sense to fix your mortgage now.

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Bank of Ireland Mortgages

All mortgages are subject to status. All APRs are variable and typical. Suitable security and life assurance are required. An additional security fee is charged for advances over 75% of property valuation. Principal applicant must be 21 years or older. Written quotations are available on request from Bank of Ireland Home Mortgages Ltd, Plaza West, Bridge Street, Reading, RG1 2LZ. This offer is available in England, Scotland and Wales only.

YOUR HOME IS AT RISK IF YOU DO NOT KEEP UP REPAYMENTS ON A MORTGAGE OR OTHER LOAN SECURED ON IT. ST0102E

هكذا من الاصل

هكذا من الأصل

Dyson picks up prize

Dyson yesterday won the European Design Prize for its bagless vacuum cleaner and launched a campaign to reform the European patent system. James Dyson, founder and managing director, attacked the way the company has to reregister its patents in every European country every year. This costs the group £300,000 a year. He is to take a case to the European Court in an attempt to bring a unified system.

Four other British companies were shortlisted: Innovative Technologies Group, the materials company; Psion, which makes hand-held computers; JCB, the digger group; and Blatchford Products, makers of artificial limbs.

Beales ahead

Beales, the provincial department stores group, lifted profits to £4 million (£3.17 million) before tax and exceptional items in the 53 weeks to November 2. In addition, there was an exceptional prior-year rebate of £465,000 arising from a successful appeal against the 1990 rateable value of the Bournemouth store. Earnings were 28.8p a share (17.7p). The total dividend is 8.3p a share (6.7p), with a 5.75p final.

Bid approach

Applied Distribution, the distributor whose shares fell sharply after a profits warning last year, said it had received a number of preliminary approaches that may lead to a bid. The announcement came after its shares rose 15½p to 62p. The company said the initial indicative offers suggested a bid would be made at a discount to the closing price, which capitalised the business at £21.8 million.

Healthy rise

Fitness First, the health club operator floated on the Alternative Investment Market in October, announced pre-tax profits of £727,000 (£217,000) for the year to October 31. Turnover was £3.71 million (£2.1 million). Earnings were 2.55p a share (1.5p). There is no dividend.

ANDRÉ CAMARA

Geoff Young, left, chairman of Prism Leisure, and Bob Skelton, finance director, who reported a 28 per cent increase in interim pre-tax profits to £880,000. Earnings were 6.9p a share (5.5p). The interim dividend was 1.73p (1.38p)

Berkeley Group seeks £33m to buy more land

BY PAUL DURMAN

BERKELEY GROUP, the *upmarket housebuilder*, gave an exceptionally upbeat account of current trading in the housing market as it sought yesterday to raise £33 million to continue buying land.

Berkeley said that since it reported good half-year results on December 10 the market had continued to be very strong and sales reservations over the Christmas period and in January had materially exceeded expectations. "Current trading, therefore, is buoyant and the outlook for the full year to April 30, 1997, is very positive."

Tony Pidgley, managing director, said that the market was strong nationwide. Berkeley has spent about £90 million on land in the past few months. From having net cash of £54 million at the end of October, it has run up borrowings of about £40 million — hence the need for yesterday's share placing.

Berkeley said that the land purchases already agreed should further underpin the group's continuing progress.

SBC Warburg placed 4.75 million new shares, equal to about 5 per cent of Berkeley's share base, at 715p each. This was 18½p more than the opening price of Berkeley's shares yesterday morning. On the back of the upbeat trading statement, the shares continued their strong run to close at 735p, a record high. Berkeley now has a market value of about £735 million.

Mr Pidgley said land purchases by housebuilders were leading to an increase in the price of land, "but it is not moving at such a rate that it's impossible to acquire".

Graham Roper, chairman, and two other directors, John Jacobs and Roger Lewis, exercised options over 203,411 shares. All but 40,000 of these were placed by SBC Warburg.

Mr Pidgley suggested that the exercise price of the options was about 240p, which would mean the three together made a gross profit of about £1 million.

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Forsyth freedom reaffirmed

BY JON ASHWORTH

ELIZABETH FORSYTH, former aide to Asil Nadir, was toasting her freedom yesterday after an Appeal Court judge reaffirmed that she was unlikely to return to prison.

Mrs Forsyth, 60, was freed on bail on Thursday after the judges hearing her appeal effectively quashed her five-year prison sentence. Lord Justice Beldam, sitting with Mrs Justice Bracewell and Mr Justice Mance, reiterated their preliminary view that the sentence was unduly harsh, but reserved judgment in the case. Bail was extended on condition that Mrs Forsyth continues to reside with her mother, Margaret McAlpine, 90, in Great Dunmow, Essex.

Mrs Forsyth is appealing against her conviction and sentence last year on two counts of handling nearly £400,000 in funds allegedly stolen from Polly Peck International (PPI). If successful, she could win compensation.

It is unclear when judgment will be given. The case could establish a legal precedent.

John Lewis sees sales rise above forecast

BY SARAH CUNNINGHAM

THE John Lewis Partnership, the department store and Waitrose supermarket group, yesterday enjoyed strong trading in its second half, it disclosed yesterday. The figures suggest that the group is taking market share from other retailers, and also bode well for the annual bonuses of its 35,000 partners.

In the 26 weeks to January 25, sales in the department stores rose by 12.4 per cent, and Waitrose sales rose by 8.7 per cent. This gave a total for the group of a 10.6 per cent increase in sales over the second half. The group's expectation had been for a 7.5 per cent rise in sales.

According to Tony Shiret, stores analyst with BZW, the John Lewis chain is clearly taking market share in some areas, particularly in its traditional strengths such as furniture and other home furnishings. Fashions and dress fabrics also saw strong trade.

The group will announce its full-year profits, and the level of the annual bonuses to be paid to partners, on March 6.

In the final week of the financial year, department store sales were ahead by 13 per cent. Brian O'Callaghan, director of trading for department stores, said: "Furnishing textiles has enjoyed a vintage half-year." Electrical appliances also sold outstandingly well, "hotly pursued by upholstery and cabinet furniture", he said.

"On the whole, fortune has favoured us this half-year," Mr O'Callaghan said, citing "improved customer confidence, an upturn in the housing market, helpful weather conditions and, most importantly, growing strength in our assortments".

Waitrose ended the year on a less positive note. In the final week, sales were up by 4.5 per cent. One factor that may have handicapped Waitrose was the growing popularity of the loyalty cards introduced by many of its publicly quoted rivals.

David Felwick, director of food trading, gave warning against complacency, saying: "We are likely to see a tightening of competitive pressures and a need, on our part, to remain on the top of our form."

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Southern Electric plans £156m payback

SHARES of Southern Electric rose 13½p, to 800½p, yesterday after the regional power company announced plans to distribute £156 million to shareholders through a complex share capital restructuring.

Southern Electric's proposals mirror those of Yorkshire Water, which is handing £145 million to its shareholders, with a complex split and buyback designed to avoid a tax clampdown on straightforward buybacks and special dividends, imposed last year by Kenneth Clarke, Chancellor of the Exchequer. Under the Southern Electric plan every existing ordinary share will be replaced with 1.84 new ordinary shares and two new B shares. SBC Warburg, the merchant bank that also devised the Yorkshire Water scheme, will offer to buy in the B shares on Southern's behalf, with no dealing costs. Shareholders will be offered 30p in cash for every B share, equivalent to 60p per existing share. Ken Coates, chairman of Southern Electric, said: "These proposals demonstrate our continuing commitment to return value to shareholders consistent with the ongoing development and growth of the business and improving service standards." Southern has been under pressure to do something with its cash since retreating last year from the takeover battle with ScottishPower for Southern Water.

SR Gent considers bids

S R GENT, a Marks & Spencer clothing supplier, is still considering takeover approaches from several parties, it said yesterday. In the meantime, Peter Wolff has decided to step down from being executive chairman to the position of non-executive president and Peter Wetzel, deputy chairman, is to become non-executive deputy chairman. "These new roles will help to avoid any conflict of interest between their current positions as both executive directors and majority shareholders," said the company. The shares fell 2p to 57½p.

Citigate details

CITIGATE, the PR firm, and Incepta Group, the recruitment consultants, yesterday detailed the reverse takeover that will take Citigate on to the stock market. Incepta is placing 41.6 million new shares to raise £8.32 before expenses — £3 million for the company and £5.32 million for certain Citigate shareholders — and the enlarged group will have a market capitalisation of at least £33.9 million. The offer is for 216.1 new Incepta shares for each Citigate share. Incepta's shares, suspended in December, will be relisted on March 3.

Partridge profits flat

PRE-TAX profits at Partridge Fine Arts, the fine art auctioneer, were unchanged at £1.8 million in the year to October 31. The company said that the summer months failed to produce the level of business that had been expected after an encouraging start to the year. Some buoyancy returned in the autumn, and the current financial year had started well, the company said. Earnings of 5.86p a share fell from 5.93p previously. The total dividend rises to 3.1p a share from 2.9p, with a 1.7p final.

Pound hits Photo-Me

PHOTO-ME International, the photo-booth manufacturer and operator, blamed the strength of the pound for a fall in pre-tax profits, from £10.1 million to £9.1 million, in the six months to October 31. The company, which earns 60 per cent of its profits overseas, said that there was a modest increase in trading profits after removing the impact of sterling's rise. The interim dividend is held at 1.5p a share, which is payable from earnings that fell to 7.45p a share from 8.94p.

BWG to buy Appleby

APPLEBY WESTWARD Group, the Spar convenience store distributor based in southwest England, has agreed to a £9.5 million takeover by BWG, a subsidiary of Pernod Ricard, which operates the Spar franchise in the Irish Republic. BWG's cash offer of 171p a share has received acceptances in respect of 76 per cent of Appleby's shares. On the stock market, Appleby shares rose 38½p to 167½p yesterday. Appleby distributes to 260 Spar stores in an area that takes in Bournemouth, Bristol, Exeter, and Southampton.

10p THE TIMES

FOOTBALL
David Miller begins
A series on the state of
the game in this country

TRAVEL
Passport to Europe
Weekend breaks in Europe
from £24 return including
travel and hotel

IN MONDAY'S
10P TIMES

ARTS
Melvyn Bragg on the direction
Channel Four will take after
the departure of Michael Grade

FEATURE
Royal godchildren
Are they the most privileged
children of their generation?

http://www.the-times.co.uk
CHANGING TIMES

Charterhouse cashes in

VENTURE capital backers of Porterbrook, the train leasing company controversially sold for £825 million last summer, yesterday made £210 million by selling shares in Stagecoach, the bus and train operating company that bought it (Paul Durman writes).

The 28.9 million shares sold were part of the consideration paid by Stagecoach to Charterhouse Development Capital and other investors in Porterbrook. The sale, handled by UBS, the investment bank, crystallises another huge profit for Porterbrook investors and management, who invested only £75 million of equity when the leasing company was privatised last January.

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia $	2.20	2.04
Austria Sch	19.51	18.01
Belgium Fr	57.25	52.95
Canada $	2.274	2.114
Cyprus Cyp£	0.824	0.769
Denmark Kr	10.62	9.82
Finland Mkk	8.41	7.76
France Fr	9.28	8.63
Germany Dm	2.79	2.58
Greece Dr	431	406
Hong Kong $	13.10	12.10
Iceland	120	100
Ireland Pt	1.06	0.98
Israel Shk	5.62	4.97
Italy Lira	2696	2543
Japan Yen	210.60	194.60
Malta	0.643	0.588
Netherlds Gld	3.106	2.876
New Zealand $	2.48	2.26
Norway Kr	11.00	10.20
Portugal Esc	275.00	216.50
S Africa Rd	7.91	7.11
Spain Pta	229.50	216.50
Sweden Kr	12.26	11.46
Switzerland Fr	2.42	2.24
Turkey Lira	193420	181420
USA $	1.707	1.577

Rates for small denomination banknotes only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

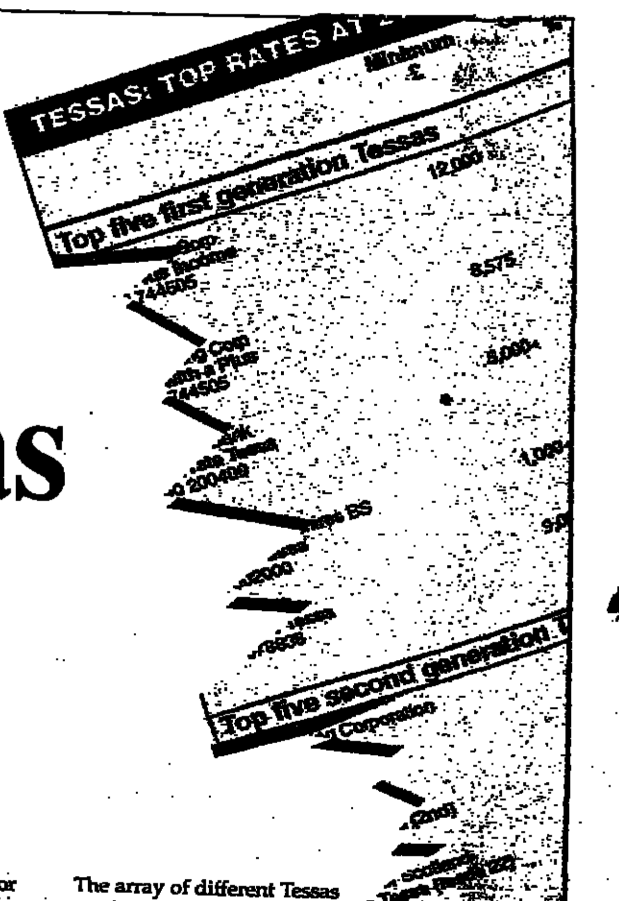
THE SUNDAY TIMES

"The president of Toyota, the world's dominant car maker, could not have guessed he had unwittingly dropped a stone that was to create great waves thousands of miles away the following day. But Hiroshi Okuda had re-opened a debate which raised a critical question for a government which prided itself on attracting record levels of foreign investment to the UK. How important is the single currency to foreign investors in this country . . ?"

Business — The Sunday Times tomorrow

FT
FINANCIAL TIMES
Magazines

Tessas on test



With interest rates at their lowest for a generation it is time to look again at Tessas. Are they still the 'must-have' investment? And how do they measure up against alternatives?

In this week's Investors Chronicle, Tessas are put to the test.

Returns on first generation Tessas vary widely. We look at the factors which affect performance, and show you how to pick the likely winners before you invest.

Special consideration must be given to second generation Tessas. We explain them in full to ensure you make the most of your tax-free investment without breaching the rules.

The array of different Tessas can be daunting. Fixed and variable rate Tessas seem simple – but are they? How risky are equity–linked Tessas? And what are the hidden costs behind Tessas guaranteeing a minimum return?

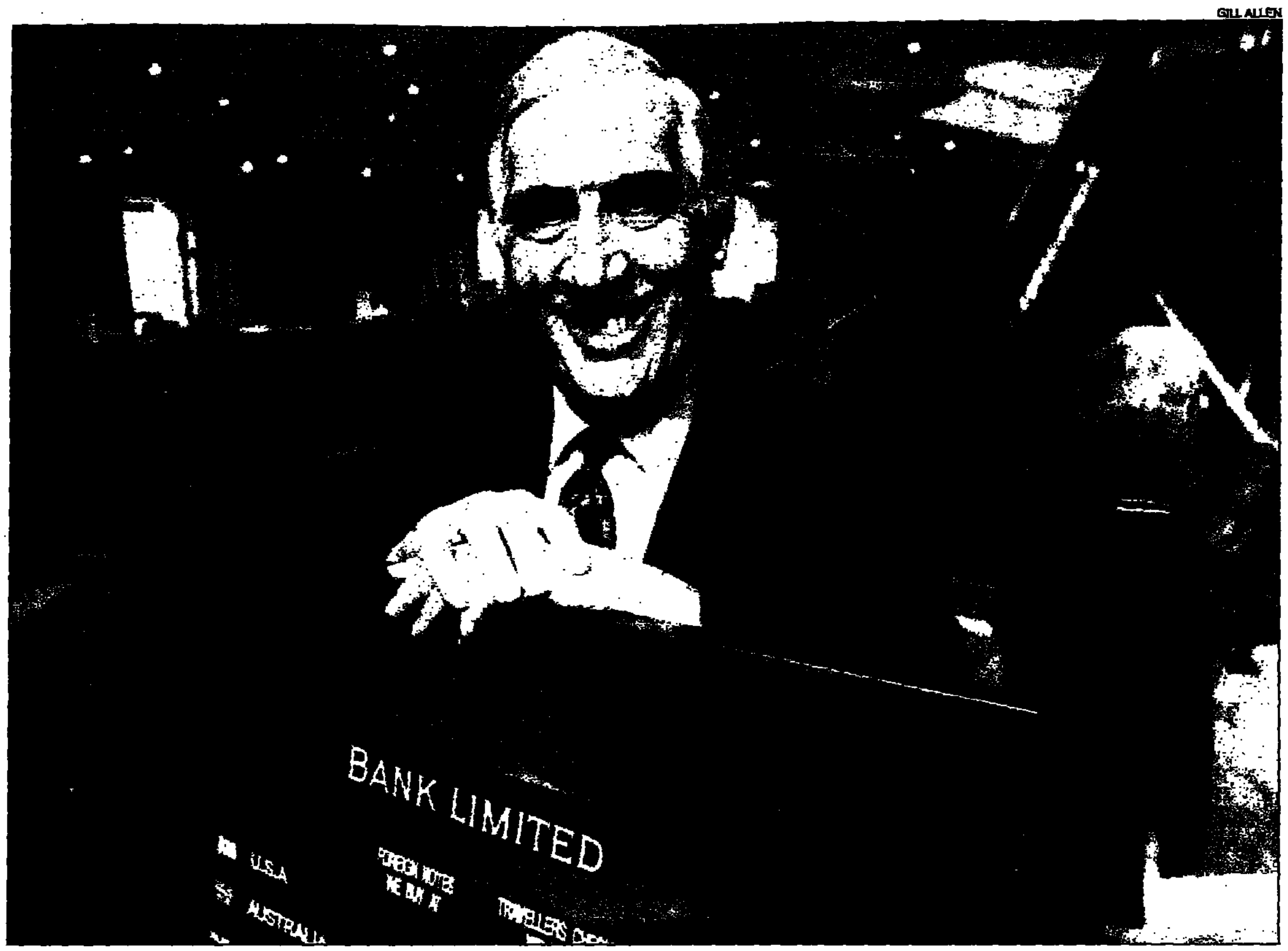
For all you need to know about Tessas don't miss this week's Investors Chronicle. On sale Friday, 31st January. Price £2.20.

INVESTORS CHRONICLE
THE CITY INSIDE OUT

A WORKING WEEK FOR: JOHN SIMMONDS

Manager of the bank that won't branch out

Jon Ashworth discovers a man who is happy running a little-known financial institution that bears a famous name


GILL ALLEN

Banker with a difference: as manager of Harrods Bank, John Simmonds sets interest rates, creates his own mortgages and takes tea with ladies who lunch

IT IS easy to miss it, but Harrods, the fashionable Knightsbridge store, *has* its own bank. And a fully-fledged one, too, providing mortgages, loans, chequebooks and everything else one would associate with a high street bank. Money can be withdrawn from cash dispensers up and down the land. Quite impressive, all things considered.

The difference is that Harrods Bank has only one branch, and the man who runs it, John Simmonds, is not your typical bank manager. He sets interest rates, creates his own mortgages, and takes tea with ladies who lunch. After 35 years with Lloyds Bank, he is, at 60, enjoying an unusual choice of second career. Not everyone would warm to the task.

Harrods Bank was founded by Harrods, is situated in Harrods and draws 60 per cent of its business from Harrods. However, it is *not* connected with Harrods. This bizarre situation harks back to the row between Tiny Rowland and Mohamed Al Fayed who, with his brothers, paid £615 million for House of Fraser in 1985.

The Department of Trade and Industry later published a damning report on the deal, saying that the Fayeds had lied about their family background and early business life in order to gain credibility.

The Bank of England subsequently forced them to relinquish operational and voting control of Harrods Bank. The voting shares were vested in the hands of Law Debenture Trust, an investment trust acting as trustee, and a new chairman and two new non-executive directors were appointed.

Chinese Walls prevail — to the extent that Simmonds is obliged to lease the floor space on which the bank is positioned. He pays Harrods for vouchers and hampers used in promotions, and he is invoiced if he uses the rooms upstairs for functions. Some Harrods executives hold accounts here, but Mohamed Al Fayed is not among them.

The tourists who wander wide-eyed through Harrods would be hard pressed to make the distinction. Cash machine cards are emblazoned with a picture of the Knightsbridge store. Customers are plied with green Harrods bags. Short of a large, red danger sign, one would never know the difference.

Simmonds, who arrived on the scene in July 1994, is reluctant to dwell on this most sensitive of topics. Suffice it to say that Harrods Bank is "completely and utterly independent of the store". The Bank of England, he says, had grown uneasy about secondary banks in general, and the changes would have happened anyway.

The most he will admit to in his dealings with Mohamed Al Fayed — "The owner" — is a dispute over the positioning of the teddy bear display near by. Simmonds wanted it moved. "The owner" said he would have his wish when the bank started to make more in sales per square foot than the bears. "That taught me one very important lesson," says Simmonds. "In a retail environment, it is all about what can be got out of the space."

An hour with Simmonds will convince you that Harrods Bank deserves to be taken seriously. It may have only one branch, but you can draw money from any number of Visa Delta cash dispensing machines — 10,000 in the UK alone. Clearing services are provided by Royal Bank of Scotland. The bank is open when Harrods is open, making it handy for obsessives who cannot see enough of their bank manager.

The trouble is, no one knows this. Many assume Harrods Bank is simply a jazzed-up branch of NatWest or Barclays. Those who make the distinction dismiss Harrods Bank as a *gimmick*: a token bank, something that cannot be taken seriously. Would you *really* feel safe putting your life savings here?

It is telling that so many of the bank's 3,500 depositors are from overseas. They include Americans (the biggest single group), Spaniards and Singaporeans — but few Japanese: ever conservative in their dealings. Simmonds insists there are "surprisingly few" Middle Eastern clients, but admits to dealings with traditionally clad Arabs.

> ❛We looked at the City but the identity would be lost outside Harrods❜

Alert to money laundering, UK banks are likely to challenge anyone seeking to exchange £1,000 or more in cash. This does not necessarily work at Harrods. Take the recent case of the Harrods manageress who fraudulently ran up £120,000 on a customer's Gold Mastercard in the space of just three months. The cardholder didn't even notice. Simmonds says: "You have to be watchful. But you have to do it in a tactful way so as not to give offence to someone who might be a very high spender."

The rich do come to call. Nick Faldo has been observed cashing his cheques. Larry Hagman, alias J. R. Ewing in *Dallas*, distributed autographed cards to anyone who would take them. "He assumed that people would automatically be interested in him."

Harrods Bank was set up in 1893 as a repository for funds sent in from the far corners of the Empire. "It probably started by accident," says Simmonds. "Harrods had a lot of overseas customers — the typical colonials — and they would write in to Harrods and say, send Auntie Maude a hamper for Christmas. Then it became school uniforms for little Johnny, and so on. Harrods suddenly found it was getting large dollops of money which it was holding for clients. It tended to evolve from that."

A century on, account holders range from local Knightsbridge residents to citizens of the Middle East. "They tend to come over very much for the high summer, when it's very hot in Saudi," says Simmonds. "They come over from August to September, enjoy London, have a huge shopping spree, theatres and all the rest of it, and then go back. Very often they will feed the accounts here, ready for their trip to the UK."

No individual customer can borrow more than £500,000 or deposit more than £1 million. "It means you're not beholden to anyone to any huge extent."

Simmonds was brought in to steer the bank after his predecessor left to work for an Arab bank. "The bank wanted a sort of caretaker situation, really. The briefing was to take a look at Harrods, see where it was, see where it should be and start getting it there. And then, ultimately, to find a successor for it. A brief like that in a small bank, to a banker, was manna from Heaven."

He hopes to sign up customers at a rate of about 50 a month, increasing the number of depositors from 3,500 to 5,000. Harrods Bank currently has about £20 million on deposit and £10 million in loans. It has 75 mortgage customers, many of them foreigners seeking London rental income.

Elderly local residents make up most of the account holders, and Simmonds is keen to widen the net. He would like to attract younger clients. "My customers predominantly would be mature, and I would like to get more of the younger market in. I believe they've reached the stage where they are possibly fed up with being part of the stereotype clearing bank set-up. It's a matter of packaging the project in a way that's going to attract them."

He also has his eye on doctors, dentists, lawyers and other professionals. "If you help get them into their first practice, you really have got them for life. With a bit of luck, you'll get the practice as well for good measure."

Simmonds is immersed in his task. He surfaces at music recitals — the bank sponsors pianists including Nikolai Demidenko and Melvyn Tan — and pays occasional visits to housebound customers. He gave a speech at the London Ladies Club; much to the annoyance of NatWest, which claimed the territory as its own.

It is a far cry from Lloyds, where Simmonds rose to become one of two area managers responsible for London's West End. After falling victim to a purge in 1991, he worked as a consultant and expert witness and was even offered a range of posts in Russia. "One was in Siberia, one was only about 50 miles from Chernobyl, Aeroflot didn't have the best safety record in the world, my wife wasn't exactly bursting with enthusiasm..."

He promised to do the Harrods job for at least three years, and claims to be enjoying himself. There are no plans to open other branches. "We've looked at the City, but the identity would be lost outside Harrods."

Simmonds in many ways represents a throwback to an older, more genteel form of banking. Those who come to call will not be pressured to take out pensions or savings plans, or quizzed about their home contents insurance. As he says: "Where the devil do people go in this day and age for free advice? It's not very easy to get it in the high street these days."

Harrods Bank may well have the answer. Pity no one has heard of it.

ASSETS

Modern lines become a Park Lane classic

The HQ of the builders of Brent Cross retains its elegance, says **Joanna Pitman**

As you drive south along Park Lane there is a point just before you reach the Dorchester where out-of-towners slow down to a snailish crawl, crane their heads to the left and swerve around dangerously trying to find a lay-by to pull in.

Trying to absorb the view, they eventually get swept on by the torrent of taxis, buses and impatient townie drivers who never seem to notice interesting buildings on their own home territory.

The object of attention for all these gawping tourists is No 100 Park Lane, the home of the UK headquarters of Hammerson plc, the property and investment development company whose fame — if it is known at all — is as the builder of Brent Cross shopping centre. But Hammerson shrewdly bought a long lease on the magnificent 19th-century villa overlooking Hyde Park for its own use in 1969 and has upgraded the interior into spacious and highly decorative offices.

The company has also opened up gallery space to show collections of contemporary art works, on sale to employees and clients. The modern art is dotted around in these gracious boardrooms, meeting rooms and offices and there is a studied high-tech modernity to the lighting and furniture. Yet the building has retained enough of its original elegance to stand at ease with the changes.

The house was built in 1827 for Viscount Dudley and Ward under the supervision of William Atkinson and J. Garding Deering, architect of St Mark's Church in North Audley Street. It was designed to reflect his status in life as a politician and incorporated magnificent yellow, blue and red drawing rooms of grand proportions and decoration, all overlooking the park. He died unmarried in 1833 and a distant relative, William, Earl of Dudley, bought the house.

Lord Dudley extended the house to include a picture gallery, a heavily gilded and decorative dining room designed by Sir Charles Barry and a ballroom where some of the most glittering occasions in the social calendar were held.

Georgina Dudley became more and more of a socialite as her husband withdrew from society as a recluse. She hosted parties and dinners, gathering the cream of London society, and struck up a friendship with Edward, Prince of Wales.

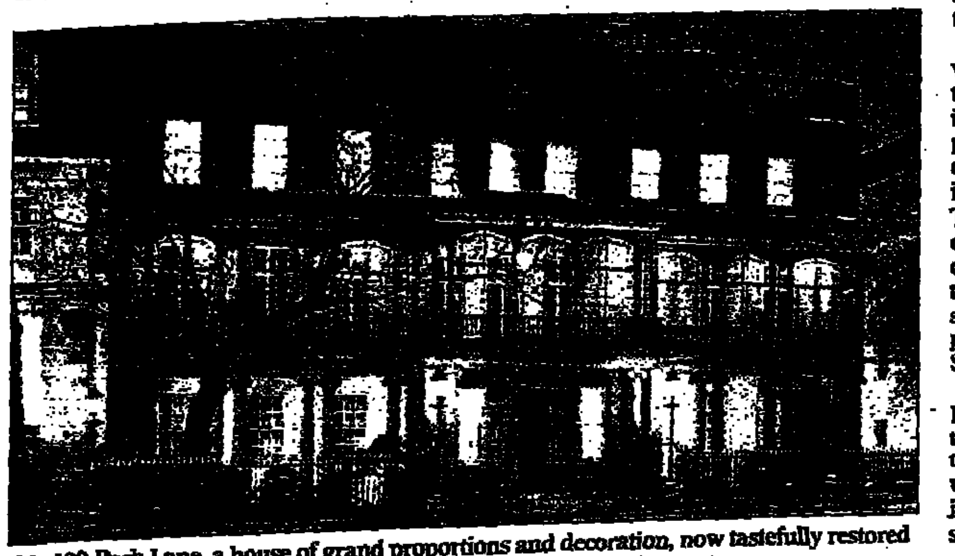
The kitchens were among the largest in London, one for the food being prepared for the family and guests, another for the servants who served the food for the family, and yet another for the servants who served the servants.

After the Earl died the social whirl of Dudley House subsided and its occupation became patchy. In 1938, when the last Dudley Ward occupant died, the house was requisitioned by the Government as offices. It suffered severe bomb damage in the Second World War.

After the war the lease reverted to the Grosvenor Estate and in 1969 Hammerson took it, on agreeing to do the necessary restoration work to return the house to its former glory.

The late Sir Basil Spence was commissioned to undertake the restoration, reorganising the ballroom and picture gallery for office accommodation and constructing a marble-floored atrium. The wonderful central staircase, which was part of the original house, remains intact and provides a perfect setting for the two extant portraits of the Dudleys by Sir Joshua Reynolds.

Elsewhere, however, the Dudleys would be surprised to find most of the rest of their home now decorated with avant garde art and intimate photographs of construction sites.


No 100 Park Lane, a house of grand proportions and decoration, now tastefully restored

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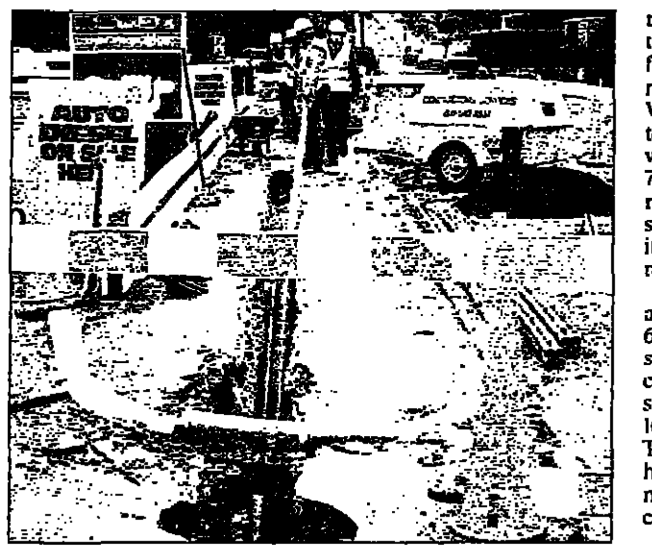
STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Firm gilts and Dow rally lift London to new highs



Developments on digital TV depressed cable shares

THE London stock market continued to take its lead from Wall Street as another wave of institutional buying swept the FT-SE 100 index to yet another high.

The index got off to a flying start on the back of an 83-point rise in the Dow Jones industrial average overnight and closed at its best of the day with a leap of 47.4 to 4,275.8. That compares with the previous best of 4,273.4 and stretches the rise on the week in London to 57 points. A total of 849 million shares had changed hands by the close.

New York kept up the pace in early trading yesterday on the back of the latest GDP figures, which showed growth without inflationary risks. Rises of more than £1 in gilts also underpinned the equity market in London.

Early attention focused on the broadcasting sector after **Carlton Communications**, up 39p at 558½p, **BSkyB**, 18½p dearer at 599p, and **Granada**, 19½p better at 897p, announced they were linking up to bid for the right to broadcast digital terrestrial television in this country.

The joint venture company will be called British Digital Broadcasting. **Flextech**, which has already linked up with the BBC to develop a digital service, climbed 39p to 699p.

By contrast **United News & Media**, publisher of the *Daily Express* and owner of Meridien and Anglia Television, has ruled itself out of bidding for a digital licence. The price dipped 9½p to 702½p

The move to digital has not been well received by the cable companies which see it as increased competition. There were setbacks for **Nynex**, 14½p to 99½p, **Telewest**, 11p to 117p, and **General Cable**, 13p to 176p.

EMI Group continued to lose ground with the price dropping a further 40½p to £12.11, for a two-day deficit of 67½p. A report confirms that sales in the music industry worldwide remain static. Earlier this week Music Land, the biggest independent music retailer in the US, filed for protection under Chapter 11.

Abbey National rose 15½p to 784p after its £1 billion bid for Scottish Amicable was rejected. Abbey is still expected to make an offer of around £350 to each of Scottish Amicable's 1.5 million policyholders. The rest of the banks were marked higher in the run-up to the dividend reporting season with **Barclays** up 22p at £11.64½, **HSBC** 39½p at £14.93½, **Standard Chartered** 21p at 771p, and **Bank of Ireland** 20p at 590p.

Elsewhere in the financial sector speculative buying, generated by news of the approach for Scottish Amicable, lifted **General Accident** 24p to 806p, **Commercial Union** 11p to 697½p, and **Legal & General** 7½p to 387p.

Biocompatibles International was the strongest performer on the day, surging 215p, or 22.8 per cent, to £11.55 with the warrants 122½p higher at 400p. It follows publication by Merrill Lynch of a major report on the company forecasting a target price for the shares of £16.

Southern Electric advanced 13p to 800½p after announcing plans to hand back a total of £156 million via a complex capital reconstruction. Hopes that other utilities may follow suit lifted **Thames Water** 19p to 677½p, **South West Water** 12½p to 675p, **Severn Trent** 12p to 704½, **Anglian Water** 8p to 633½p, and **Hyder** 8½p to 817½p.

Premier Farnell touched 512½p before ending the day 6p better 526½p as it completed the sale of its electronics components distribution business. The shares are still down 164p on the week after this week's shock profits warning just a year after Farnell paid £1.7 billion for Premier Industries in the US.

Berkeley Group, the upmarket housebuilder, reached a new high with a leap of 38p at 735p on the back of a bullish trading statement. Its market remains strong. The company took advantage of the jump in the share price to raise extra funds totalling almost £34 million via a placing. SBC Warburg, the broker, placed a total of 4.75 million shares with various institutions at 715p. It wants the money to replenish its coffers after splashing out £54 million on its land bank in recent months.

Grosvenor Inns, the Slug and Lettuce chain of pubs, fell 6p to 216p after denying recent speculation that it had received a bid approach. The share price has come up from 165p in little more than a week. The company is due to unveil half-year figures later this month. The group is currently capitalised at £31.5 million.

Laura Ashley, the soft furnishings group, fell 4p to 157½p as a line of 600,000 shares went through the market at 155p.

The latest drilling reports from **Pan Andean**, the AIM-listed, loss-making oil exploration group, failed to live up to expectations, leaving the price 2½p lower at 65p. A disappointing drilling report last year saw the shares drop from a peak of 135p.

S R Gent, the clothing maufacturer, has received several bid approaches and brokers say the directors may be holding out for a high price. This may be why the shares ended 2p easier at 57½p. The company currently carries a price tag of £22 million.

☐ **GILT-EDGED:** The London bond market got off to a strong start after a positive performance overnight by US Treasury bonds. Prices at the longer end climbed by more than £1.

The market also received a boost from from the latest American GDP numbers which were perceived to be good for the economy and unlikely to prompt a rise in interest rates when the Federal Open Market Committe meets next week.

The March series of the long gilt rose £25/32 to £110 31/32 as the total number of contracts reached 69,000. Treasury 8 per cent 2015 put on £1 1/16 at £103 15/16, while Treasury 8 per cent 2000 was five ticks better at £103 7/16.

☐ **NEW YORK:** A firm bond market translated into a stock market rally for the third consecutive day and by midday the Dow Jones industrial average was 41.56 points higher at 6,865.42.

Tomkins, the guns to buns group, rose 8½p to 280p. Salomon Brothers, the US securities house, has begun following the company's fortunes and rates the shares a "buy". Just as well. There was a mute response to last month's figures which served to highlight the continuing underperformance of the shares.

MOVERS OF THE WEEK

	Current price	Week's change	
Premier Farnell	526½p	-164p	Profits warning
Carlton	558½pp	+65p	Joint bid for digital TV
British Borneo	£13.65	+223½p	Talking to brokers
J Sainsbury	322½p	-18½p	Profits warning
Newman Tonks	179p	+27½p	Ingersoll Rand counter-bid
Norbain	316p	-123p	Profits warning
EMI Group	£12.11	-46p	Worries about current trading
Hogg Robinson	218p	-73p	Profits warning
Domino Printing	336½p	+62½p	Higher profits/pick-up in US

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):	
Dow Jones	6865.42 (+41.56)
S&P Composite	790.41 (+6.24)
Tokyo:	
Nikkei Average	18330.01 (+465.97)
Hong Kong:	
Hang Seng	13321.79 (+33.39)
Amsterdam:	
EOE Index	675.68 (+0.59)
Sydney:	
AO	2423.7 (+6.0)
Frankfurt:	
DAX	3035.15 (+17.83)
Singapore:	
Straits	2216.47 (-0.24)
Brussels:	
General	11374.01 (+25.32)
Paris:	
CAC-40	2516.56 (+13.50)
Zurich:	
SKA Gen	910.00 (-7.60)
London:	
FT 30	2847.1 (+16.5)
FT 100	4275.8 (+47.4)
FTSE Mid 250	4594.4 (+22.8)
FTSE 350	2115.5 (+20.8)
FTSE Eurotrack 100	2055.31 (+9.94)
FT All-Share	2087.61 (+19.45)
FT Non Financials	2144.11 (+16.95)
FT Fixed Interest	117.19 (+0.05)
FT Govt Secs	94.61 (+0.34)
Bargains	44317
SEAQ Volume	849.4m
US$	1.6627 (-0.0118)
German Mark	2.6233 (-0.0230)
Exchange Index	94.4 (-0.8)
Bank of England official close (4pm)	
£:ECU	1.3485
£:SDR	1.1622
RPI	154.4 Dec (2.5%) Jan 1987=100
RPIX	154.2 Dec (3.1%) Jan 1987=100

RECENT ISSUES

BZW Endowment Red	53	...
Enterprise Vent (100)	89½	...
Epicore Network	55	...
GB Railways	207½	+ 23½
Hardy Underwrtg	170	...
John Lewis	4	...
Netcall	60½	...
Oxford Biomedica	55½	...
Parkwood Holdings	75	+ ½
Pilat Technologies	59½	...
Prelude Tst	105½	+ 4
Prelude Warrants	33½	+ 3
Sheffield United	85½	+ 4
Sunderland	752½	...
Sutton Harbour	133½	...

RIGHTS ISSUES

Ashquay n/p (33)	2	...
Gt Portland n/p (190)	10	...
Hall Eng n/p (250)	8½	...
Morland n/p (500)	72½	...

MAJOR CHANGES

RISES:	
Shield Diag	175½p (+20p)
Carlton Comm	558½p (+39p)
Wilson (C)	173p (+11½p)
Con Ritblat	261p (+16p)
Eurodis Elect	213½p (+12p)
Flextech	699p (+39p)
DCS Group	267½p (+13p)
Filtronic Com	324p (+15p)
Gen Accident	806p (+24p)
Stand Chart	771p (+21p)
Highland Distl	359p (+9½p)
Berkeley Gp	735p (+38½p)
Cookson	251½p (+10p)
British Gas	224½p (+8p)
Bk of Ireland	590p (+20p)
FALLS:	
TeleWest	117p (-11p)
Prism Rail	470p (-35p)
General Cable	176p (-13p)
Logica	889p (-32½p)
WF Elect	630p (-20p)
Cable Wireless	466p (-13p)
Brake Bros	504p (-13½p)
Eurotherm	497½p (-11p)
Reuters	656p (-11½p)
Xenova	288p (-10p)

Closing Prices Page 45

TEMPUS

Abbey sinks flotation

ABBEY NATIONAL has driven a coach and horses through Scottish Amicable's cosy flotation plans, and the directors of the insurance group are hopping mad. This is hardly surprising: a stock market quote provided an opportunity to offer incentives to ScotAm's staff including the directors who could earn £1 million apiece.

From that perspective, it is easy to understand why ScotAm's bosses are not feeling amicable towards the Abbey. The latter's £400 million cash or shares offer to policyholders sounds better than the £200 million gain on flotation that ScotAm proposes. ScotAm talks up the future benefits of flotation but most of the 1.1 million policyholders will be tempted by cash on the nail. The insurer forecasts that it will be able to match Abbey's offer by expanding the company at 25 per cent a year in the years preceding flotation, but such growth depends on the success of an untested new fund established with capital from Swiss Re. To beat Abbey's offer, the new fund must grow by an ambitious 30 per cent each year.

Abbey is playing a strong card by offering to keep the ScotAm directors in their Stirling offices. When Abbey bought Scottish Mutual in 1992 it gave a similar five-year commitment which has just expired. Abbey is keeping mum about cost-savings — a City euphemism for job cuts — but Scottish Mutual's Glasgow office is likely to bear the brunt. It would be at least courteous to provide ScotAm policyholders with a chance to consider Abbey's offer before the flotation vote. Long-term performance is all very well but few policyholders are expecting £1 million bonuses.

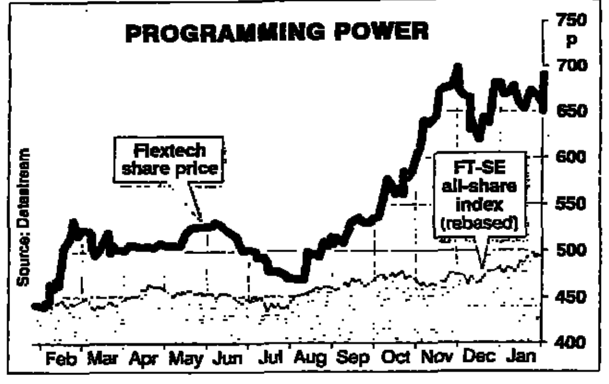
Flextech

THE stock market yesterday divided media stocks into two neat camps of winners and losers. Carlton, Granada and BSkyB, the commercial broadcasters that banded together to launch digital terrestrial television (DTT), gained ground. The shares of cable companies slumped. Both reactions were overdone.

Cable suffered because investors fear that DTT will gain subscribers at their expense. Initially, the new service will have capacity for about 30 channels, a decadent overabundance to most viewers, used to a mere four. But the cost of these channels to subscribers has not been revealed and may prove no cheaper than the cable-TV offerings.

Cable-TV, in digital form, will provide hundreds of channels — more than any sane viewer could require — but that is *not* the point. Cable-TV, unlike DTT, is capable of providing high-speed interactive services such as home shopping, home banking and Internet access. The potential here is enormous but will take years to realise fully.

Flextech was the one company whose share price rise was not overdone. A joint venture with the BBC is to provide the four subscription channels that will form the heart of the 15 channel-menu provided by the Carlton-led DTT group. The BBC is a strong brand and the sale of the four channels will guarantee it ever increasing income for ten years.



City salaries

WHAT is a quant and how does it earn £1 million? This week a recruitment agency advertised several jobs for quantitative researchers, including "global head of quantitative research", a job requiring a PhD and six years of work in the field. Applicants are said to be numerous, attracted by a base salary of up to £1 million and the reassuring statement that "management experience not necessary".

Any global investment bank with pretensions fills its backroom with quants or rocket scientists: the caricature depicts highly numerate males in their 20s with a knack for constructing statistical models of the market. Lacking interpersonal skills, they more than make up for it with an ability to predict short-term price trends.

A statistical approach to investment is attractive to banks because it avoids the risks of conventional stock picking. But such people are in short supply and this leads to a different kind of risk.

In the old days, brokers didn't earn salaries, they lived off half the commission on their trades. That protected the firm in hard times and enabled it to expand without extra capital. But the misguided banks believe that employees must be loyal team-players. In desperate pursuit of a perfect investment theory, they offer guaranteed bonuses to tempt talent into their fold. Inevitably, the quants will quit, lose credibility or a bundle for the banks. What is a quant? In plain English, it is an overhead.

Berkeley

BERKELEY'S reputation rests on astute reading of the housing market, first turning its land holdings into cash in 1988 and then buying sites ahead of the recovery in 1991-92. Judging from yesterday's statement, the housebuilder has once again spotted an opportunity and is moving swiftly to take advantage.

Berkeley has spent not far short of £100 million on land in the past three months and is raising another £33 million to keep on buying. Its move is supported by a sudden surfeit of enthusiasm among housebuyers. Berkeley, whose houses cost £210,000 on average, was awash with good news yesterday: the market was very strong, sales were materially ahead of expectations, trading was buoyant and the outlook very positive.

Buying land now should enable the company to avoid having to pay over the odds when land prices inevitably rise.

Berkeley's shares have had a tremendous run. In the current environment it is difficult to argue with Berkeley's record. The shares look expensive, but quality never comes cheap.

EDITED BY CARL MORTISHED

COMMODITIES

LIFFE

COCOA

[illegible]

ROBUSTA COFFEE ($)

[illegible]

WHITE SUGAR (FOB)

[illegible]

MEAT & LIVESTOCK COMMISSION

Average fatstock prices at representative markets on January 30

(p/kg lw)	Pig	Sheep	Cattle
GB	74.24	139.79	[illegible]
Eng/Wales	73.34	140.44	[illegible]
Scotland	[illegible]	137.44	[illegible]

ICIS-LOR (London 6.00pm)

CRUDE OILS ($/barrel FOB)

Brent Physical	23.30	-0.10
Brent 15 day (Mar)	22.40	-0.06
Brent 15 day (Apr)	22.35	-0.10
W Texas Intermediate (Mar)	24.50	-0.10
W Texas Intermediate (Apr)	24.00	-0.10

PRODUCTS ($/MT)

Spot CIF NW Europe (prompt delivery)

	Bid	Offer
Premium Gold	222 (-4)	224 (-2)
Gasoil EEC	212 (-4)	214 (-4)
3.5 Fuel Oil	97 (n/c)	99 (n/c)
Naphtha	226 (n/c)	228 (n/c)

IPE FUTURES (GNI Ltd)

GAS OIL

Feb	209.25-09.50	May	189.75-90.00
Mar	n/a	Jun	188.00 SLR
Apr	195.25-95.50		Vol: 18923

BRENT (6.00pm)

Mar	22.90-22.92	Jun	n/a
Apr	22.34-22.40	Jul	n/a
May	21.93-21.97		Vol: 22761

GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES

LIFFE WHEAT (close £/t)		LIFFE BARLEY (close £/t)	
Mar	94.25	Mar	94.00
May	96.50	May	94.50
Jul	98.35	Sep	91.00
Sep	92.25	Nov	93.00
Nov	94.25	Jan	95.00
Volume: 565		Volume: 35	

LIFFE POTATO (£/t)

	Open	Close
Mar	unq	52.0
Apr	54.0	56.0
May	61.0	67.0
		Volume 32

RUBBER (No 1 RSS Cif p/k)

Feb 78.75-79.25

LIFFE BIFFEX (GNI Ltd $10/pt)

	High	Low	Close
Feb 97	1420	1390	1400
Mar 97	1465	1415	1455
Apr 97	1500	1490	1500
Jul 97	1290	1250	1270

Vol: 303 lots Open Interest: 3765

Index 1367 -5

LONDON METAL EXCHANGE

(Official) (Volume prev day) Rudolf Wolff

	Cash	3mth	Vol
Copper Gde A ($/tonne)	2392.0-2394.0	2162.0-2164.0	1972975
Lead ($/tonne)	664.00-665.00	677.00-678.00	285675
Zinc Spec Hi Gde ($/tonne)	1140.0-1141.0	1162.0-1162.5	577925
Tin ($/tonne)	5800.0-5810.0	5865.0-5870.0	30345
Aluminium Hi Gde ($/tonne)	1591.0-1591.5	1616.0-1617.0	1461150
Nickel ($/tonne)	7425.0-7435.0	7530.0-7535.0	76974

LIFFE OPTIONS

[illegible]

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol
Long Gilt	Mar 97	110-11	111-02	110-09	110-31	69159
Previous open interest: 147017	Jun 97	109-30	110-08	109-30	110-14	4
German Govt Bond (Bund)	Mar 97	101.35	101.76	101.18	101.71	156106
Previous open interest: 251954	Jun 97	100.53	100.81	100.44	100.82	756
Italian Govt Bond (BTP)	Mar 97	130.45	130.70	129.60	130.59	89158
Previous open interest: 121394	Jun 97	129.90	130.00	129.20	130.02	493
Japanese Govt Bond (JGB)	Mar 97	126.39	126.43	126.26	126.35	1371
	Jun 97	124.91	124.91	124.87	124.90	111
Three Mth Sterling	Mar 97	93.62	93.65	93.62	93.64	10768
	Jun 97	93.39	93.40	93.35	93.39	14540
Previous open interest: 463400	Sep 97	93.15	93.20	93.12	93.18	12275
Three Mth Euromark	Feb 97	96.88	96.88	96.88	96.89	300
Previous open interest: 1169855	Mar 97	96.88	96.90	96.87	96.90	17929
Three Mth Eurolira	Mar 97	93.13	93.15	93.01	93.12	36321
Previous open interest: 264296	Jun 97	93.64	93.65	93.51	93.64	19554
Three Mth Euroyen	Jun 97	99.43	99.43	99.43	99.42	182
	Sep 97				99.34	0
Three Mth Euroswiss	Mar 97	98.24	98.27	98.21	98.26	7100
Previous open interest: 45228	Jun 97	98.22	98.25	98.17	98.25	6421
Three Mth ECU	Mar 97	95.98	95.98	95.95	95.98	1344
Previous open interest: 34026	Jun 97	96.01	96.02	95.96	96.01	623
FTSE 100	Mar 97	4250.0	4272.0	4234.0	4263.0	13270
Previous open interest: 67773	Jun 97				4292.5	0

MONEY RATES (%)

Base Rates: Clearing Banks 6 Finance Hse 6
Discount Market Loans: O/night high: 6½ Low 6 Week fixed: 6¼
Treasury Bills (Dis): Buy: 2 mth 6; 3 mth 6; Sell: 2 mth 5⅞; 3 mth 5⅞

	1 mth	2 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
Prime Bank Bills (Dis)	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	
Sterling Money Rates	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Interbank:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Overnight: open 5¾, close 6					
Local Authority Deps	[illegible]	n/a	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Sterling CDs:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Dollar CDs:	5.36	n/a	5.43	5.55	5.84
Building Society CDs:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

TREASURY BILLS: Applicts: £2,206m allotted: £400m; Bids: £98.52% received: 89%; Last week: £98.525 received: 67%, Avge rate: £5.9340% last wk £5.9134%; Next week: £400m

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)

Currency	7 day	1 mth	3 mth	6 mth	Call
Dollar:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	5-4
Deutschemark:	[illegible]	[illegible]	3-3	[illegible]	[illegible]
French Franc:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Swiss Franc:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Yen:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	1-par

GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co)

Bullion: Open $344.50-344.90 **Close:** $343.65-344.15 **High:** $346.45-346.95 **Low:** $343.05-343.55 **AM:** $345.00 **PM:** $345.50

Krugerrand: $343.00-345.00 (£213.50-215.50)

Platinum: $371.25 (£229.50) **Silver:** $4.[illegible] **Palladium:** $123.65 (£77.25)

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Mkt Rates for January 31	Range	Close	1 month	3 month
Amsterdam	2.9351-2.9503	2.9448-2.9473	[illegible]	[illegible]
Brussels	53.890-54.210	54.044-54.093	15-10pr	45-35pr
Copenhagen	9.9550-10.023	10.002-10.017	[illegible]	[illegible]
Dublin	1.0056-1.0100	1.0066-1.0085	[illegible]	15-9pr
Frankfurt	2.6139-2.6257	2.6231-2.6257	[illegible]	[illegible]
Lisbon	262.09-263.35	262.94-263.26	[illegible]	[illegible]
Madrid	220.95-222.18	221.88-222.18	4-6ds	11-29ds
Milan	2575.7-2590.0	2578.1-2593.5	20-35ds	58-80ds
Montreal	2.1579-2.1663	2.1592-2.1613	0.5441-49pr	1.12-1.04pr
New York	1.5904-1.6056	1.6020-1.6030	0.1040.08pr	0.305-0.275pr
Oslo	10.377-10.414	10.387-10.399	[illegible]	[illegible]
Paris	8.8170-8.8670	8.8546-8.8617	2-1½pr	[illegible]
Stockholm	11.527-11.624	11.570-11.598	[illegible]	[illegible]
Tokyo	194.52-195.14	194.40-194.68	[illegible]	[illegible]
Vienna	18.455-18.497	18.454-18.478	[illegible]	[illegible]
Zurich	2.2710-2.2825	2.2792-2.2822	[illegible]	[illegible]

Source: Extel Premium pr Discount ds.

DOLLAR RATES

Australia	1.3123-1.3131
Austria	11.51-11.52
Belgium (Com)	33.76-33.80
Canada	1.3466-1.3471
Denmark	6.2431-6.2451
France	5.5270-5.5280
Germany	1.6370-1.6375
Hong Kong	7.7485-7.7495
Ireland	1.5880-1.5900
Italy	1609.50-1610.25
Japan	121.38-121.43
Malaysia	2.4860-2.4870
Netherlands	1.8387-1.8392
Norway	6.4837-6.4839
Portugal	164.13-164.18
Singapore	1.4072-1.4082
Spain	138.52-138.60
Sweden	7.2401-7.2476
Switzerland	1.4220-1.4230

OTHER STERLING

Argentina peso*	1.5992-1.6019
Australia dollar	2.0968-2.0993
Bahrain dinar	0.5965-0.6085
Brazil real*	1.6724-1.6767
China yuan	13.048-13.398
Cyprus pound	0.7815-0.7915
Finland markka	7.7400-7.8560
Greece drachma	408.25-415.25
Hong Kong dollar	12.3976-12.4031
India rupee	56.89-57.85
Indonesia rupiah	3763.0-3831.6
Kuwait dinar KD	0.4780-0.4880
Malaysia ringgit	3.9759-3.9799
New Zealand dollar	2.3232-2.3263
Pakistan rupee	63.60 BUY
Saudi Arabia riyal	5.7575-5.8815
Singapore dollar	2.2515-2.2538
S Africa rand (com)	7.2470-7.3490
U A E dirham	5.8075-5.9315

*Barclays Bank GTS * Lloyds Bank*

FTSE VOLUMES

3I	713	Lloyds TSB	6,100
ASDA Gp	17,900	LucasVarity	7,000
Abbey Ntl	2,400	Marks Spr	4,400
Allied Dom	6,600	Mercury Asset	119
Argos	1,600	NatWst Bk	2,600
AB Foods	901	Nat Grid	10,000
BAA	5,300	Nat Power	3,400
BAT Inds	6,600	Next	117
BOC	1,400	Orange	541
BP	6,500	P & O	3,800
BSkyB	12,900	Pearson	2,700
BTR	7,100	PowerGen	4,000
BT	9,900	Prudential	7,200
Bk of Scot	3,700	RMC	399
Barclays	1,600	RTZ	3,300
Bass	1,000	Railtrack	1,100
Blue Circle	2,400	Rank Group	6,000
Boots	879	Reckitt Col	807
BAe	2,600	Redland	590
BA	1,900	Reed Intl	2,500
Brit Gas	19,200	Rentokil Inl	4,100
Brit Steel	15,400	Reuters	8,900
Burmah Cstl	1,200	Rolls Royce	1,200
Burton	4,000	Royal & Sun	5,500
Cable Wire	10,400	Royal Bk Scl	1,700
Cadbury	4,400	Safeway	8,400
Carlton	12,000	Sainsbury	7,400
Cm Union	2,000	Schroders	178
Dixons	7,100	Scot & New	656
EMI	6,400	Scot Power	2,600
Enterpr Oil	2,500	Svrn Trent	4,100
GKN	517	Shell Trans	5,800
GRE	6,800	Siebe	1,100
GUS	5,600	SmKl Bch	6,500
Gen Acc	991	Smith Nph	1,100
Gen Elec	2,200	Smiths Inds	876
Glaxo Well	5,900	Std Chartd	2,500
Granada	4,300	TI Gp	2,100
Grand Met	4,200	Tate & Lyle	2,400
Guinness	4,300	Tesco	5,400
HSBC	1,800	Thames W	2,400
Hanson	12,500	Tomkins	3,900
Hays	1,900	Unilever	788
ICI	6,500	Utd Utilities	1,800
Imp Tob	4,700	Utd News	1,700
Kingfisher	1,700	Vodafone	5,400
LASMO	5,100	Whitbread	451
Ladbroke	4,300	Wlms Hld	3,500
Land Secs	1,300	Wolseley	833
Legal & Gn	3,300	Zeneca	2,000

WALL STREET

Jan 31 midday Jan 30 close

[illegible]

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The changing face for funds in Hong Kong

THE TIMES: PERSONAL FINANCE NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

Battle for ScotAm under way

Policyholders are irritated by a deal which they claim will only benefit management, say

Marianne Curphey and **Anne Ashworth**

Houghton-Connell: critical

Policyholders with Scottish Amicable could be an average £400 richer by the summer if their board accepts a £400 million windfall tabled by Abbey National yesterday.

The mutual's controversial plans to float in three to five year's time have been thrown into doubt after the bank offered a cash or shares deal to Scottish Amicable's 1.1 million with-profit policyholders.

Though the payout is of similar value to the one Scottish Amicable is promising but not guaranteed to pay on flotation, Abbey plans to pay immediately, rather than at least three years hence. In addition, Abbey will offer cash or shares, while Scottish Amicable plans to add bonuses to life policies. The money will not be accessible until the policies mature in up to 25 years' time.

Scottish Amicable is facing increasing opposition from policyholders who feel they have been short-changed by their board's offer. They are angry that payments to policyholders are by no means guaranteed and are dependent on strong future growth of at least 25 per cent each year. In order to better the Abbey's offer, ScotAm will have to grow by 30 per cent yearly — an ambitious target.

Meanwhile, the mutual's management stand to benefit by up to £12 million on flotation. At the forefront of the campaign to secure a better deal for members is Stephen Ross of Northways, a firm of London insurance brokers.

Mr Ross, who has been a ScotAm policyholder for 17 years, wants an independent professional opinion on the deal which he believes disadvantages policyholders who are the owners of the company.

He said: "My speciality is motor and household insurance. I claim no special expertise in the financial services field but speak as an ordinary Scottish Amicable investor. The Abbey National bid for the company has only served to reinforce my initial misgivings about the proposed demutualisation. It is now more vital than ever that we have an independent review and an independent valuation."

Other policyholders who share Mr Ross's scepticism have contacted *The Times*, irritated by the meagre bonuses being offered to policyholders, which contrast with the rich rewards that could be in store for directors. Desmond Houghton-Connell, a landscape designer from Petworth, West Sussex, holds three Scottish Amicable endowment policies. Like Mr Ross, Mr Houghton-Connell does not object to Scottish Amicable's wish to demutualise but believes that policyholders should be better compensated for giving up the ownership of the business.

His objections add to his general dissatisfaction with investment performance: "The rise in share prices has not been reflected in our bonuses."

In light of the policyholders' resistance to the deal proposed by the Scottish Amicable board, insurance analysts now believe there is little likelihood of the company remaining independent and that a bidding war is about to begin. Many large insurance groups including Prudential, Swiss Re, NatWest, and Generale, Allianz and Fortis, the continental insurers, are known to be looking for a purchase in the UK life industry. Scottish Amicable said it had received "a number of calls" from potential partners after the news broke of the Abbey approach.

Policyholders will receive some limited information about the Abbey bid when they receive a circular in the next two weeks. Sandy Stewart, Scottish Amicable chairman, said the documents would contain "reference" to the Abbey offer, but claimed the offer was at present "too vague and imprecise" to merit full discussion within the documents.

He said that despite claims that the board would benefit greatly from the deal, the non-executive directors had scrutinised the Scottish Amicable proposals and believed them to be "in the best interests of our policyholders". However, the merchant bankers and lawyers advising the company and representing policyholders' interest must also examine the deal.

Meanwhile, in an attempt to win support for the proposals, which will be put to the vote in March, Scottish Amicable embarked on a charm offensive. A new candour has crept into the company's attempts to justify its decision to shed its mutual status and become a quoted company. Instead of portraying the deal as a windfall bonanza for the 1.1 million with-profit policyholders, Scottish Amicable now admits that it needs to give a new direction to the company and its staff.

The company has been forced to defend the proposed new employee share scheme from which a dozen Scottish Amicable directors and executives could receive as much as £12 million, provided they improve profitability by 15 per cent or more a year until 2001. Roy Nicholson, chief executive of Scottish Amicable, said this week that he was aiming for a 25 per cent improvement, which could boost with-profit policyholders' funds by as much as £321 million. Another £35 million would be shared by staff and directors. The 12 managers would get 35 per cent, around £12 million, leaving £23 million to be shared among 2,200 employees.

The rewards for policyholders are far less substantial. The first demutualisation bonus to be paid this year will be worth £75 million, an average of around £70 per policyholder. Scottish Amicable estimates the second demutualisation bonus, to be distributed in three or five years, to be worth between £250 million and £325 million.

WEEKEND MONEY
is edited by Anne Ashworth

ALAN WELLER

Stephen Ross wants independent opinion on the proposal which he believes disadvantages policyholders

Lambeth targets speculators

The Lambeth Building Society has moved to exclude "carpetbaggers", while savers with the Bristol & West have learnt that they are in line to receive up to £6,000 when it is taken over by the Bank of Ireland in July or August.

The Lambeth has taken the bold step of raising the minimum investment for its Postal 30 account from £1,000 to £2,500 in an attempt to ward off speculators hoping for windfall payments.

It followed the Skipton and Britannia building societies, which have both attempted to deter people flocking to open accounts in the hope of getting free shares if they convert to banks.

The Portman considered, and rejected, a proposal to raise its minimum opening balance for a share account, which now stands at £100.

The Bristol & West published details of its timetable and said transfer documents and voting forms would be sent out next month. Members' approval for the takeover by the Bank of Ireland will be sought at a special general meeting to be held on April 15. If approved, details of free shares will be sent to qualifying members.

The transfer of business and official change of status from building society to Bristol & West plc will be made on a vesting date in July or August. Twenty-eight days later, cash and shares will be distributed.

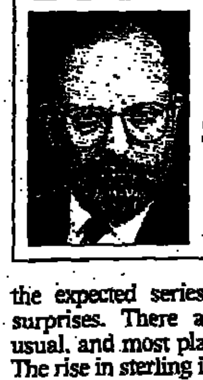
About a million borrowers and savers will qualify for either cash or shares. On average, an investor of more than two years' standing will get £1,000 in cash, while borrowers will receive £250 in Bristol & West preference shares. To receive £6,000, a member must have a balance of £100,000.

The society needs a high proportion of votes in favour. At least 75 per cent of those who vote must back the proposal.

MARIANNE CURPHEY

Season of nasty surprises

PERSONAL INVESTOR



GRAHAM SEARJEANT

The changing seasons are marked as regularly on the stock market as in real life. Now is the season of the profit warning. Quoted companies that draw their accounts up to the end of the calendar year, or in the first three months of the new year, are now a big majority. And as boards get their first glimpse of the reckoning, there are bound to be some nasty surprises.

A few years ago, boards would say nothing in public until they published disappointing results, but hints would be dropped to any market professional who cared to ask that they should not expect too much. Under modern rules, they should make an official statement if they think the market is under a misapprehension. But it is a moot point how far out City forecasts need to be before a company corrects them.

Premier Farnell was embarking on a series of visits to stockbrokers on Wednesday but did not get beyond its first point of call at BZW, its own broker, which advised a statement. The Farnell case shows, however, why companies wish to avoid drama if they can. The last-minute change of plan led to Premier Farnell shares shedding a quarter of their market value by Thursday night, a fall seemingly disproportionate to the bad news.

As in the earlier cases of Sainsbury and Sears, both repeat offenders, the extent of the price fall owes more to lack of trust than shortfall in profits. That is partly because analysts and fund managers are upset at being proved wrong.

In the first month of 1997, however, profit warnings have been worse than the expected series of random nasty surprises. There are far more than usual, and most play the same refrain. The rise in sterling is beginning to hurt. Over the past six months, the pound's average value abroad has risen 14 per cent, varying from a 6 per cent gain against the dollar to nearer 17 per cent against the mark and its satellites.

Aside from giving an unexpected, and somewhat misplaced, boost to the case for joining the euro, this is hitting profits in two ways. The first, most general and least important is that profits earned in subsidiaries abroad count for less in sterling this year than last.

Unless financial ratios are upset, this translation effect is a one-off and might be reversed as soon as financial markets thought German or American interest rates were more likely to rise than Britain's. As America is the most generous host of British overseas investment, the impact so far could be worse, as shown by the market's relief at a profit "warning" from Tate & Lyle. Genuine trading effects can be more damaging. Continental goods become relatively cheaper over there, in Britain and in third-country export markets.

The 1992-93 gain to competitiveness from leaving Europe's exchange-rate mechanism has been lost. Investors need to worry more about this than translation of overseas profits. The impact on sales and profit margins is genuine and can inflict permanent damage even if the currency movements are partly reversed at another stage in international economic cycles.

Already, forecasts of domestic economic growth are being scaled back because exports are being lost and, to a lesser extent, home sales lost to imports. Forecaster at the National Institute, once more optimistic than the Chancellor, are now looking for more modest 1997 growth of 2.5 per cent.

On the stock market, systematic revisions of profit forecasts are beginning to affect overall prospects. Natwest Securities, which builds its earnings projections from forecasts of individual companies, has already found its projected 11 per cent rise in reported earnings in 1997 falling into single figures, probably to about 9 per cent, big sectors such as pharmaceuticals being badly hit.

That will make it harder for the share index to scale new heights in the short term. But sterling's surge curbs inflation and limits the need for any rise in interest rates before May. By then, politics will be the chief concern and City air will ring to a different kind of warning.

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John Major has promised a greater slice of the cake to employees with a scheme to extend share ownership in the workplace. It should more than double the number of participants

Equity boost for the employees

Gavin Lumsden reports on the Government's scheme to extend share ownership among workers

John Major kicked off his re-election campaign yesterday with a pledge at least to double the number of employees owning shares in large companies.

Launching "Sharematch", the Prime Minister said he wanted to encourage more people to join approved profit-sharing and share-option schemes by relaxing the rules governing them. The Government currently loses £200 million in lost revenue through such schemes.

His move is likely to counteract the effect of last November's Budget which started the phased withdrawal of profit-related pay schemes currently enjoyed by 3.7 million people

Mr Major said: "Our challenge to Britain's largest businesses is that, by the turn of the century, more than half of their employees should own shares or options in those companies.

"Already around two million people own a share in the company they work for through employee share schemes. My aim is a massive expansion in those numbers. It's a way of building a people's share in the country's future as our economy grows."

He added: "Many companies would like to give employees free shares when the employee invests money of his or her own. But Inland Revenue rules are too restrictive at the moment.

"So I intend to change the rules to help more companies to top up their employees' investment in shares with free shares from the company. I see no reason why this should not develop into a normal part of an employment package.

"And we are consulting with industry and trade bodies over ways to make existing schemes even more attractive."

A Treasury spokesman said the Government was particularly keen to relax the buy-one-get-one-free rules which only allow companies to give one share to each share bought by an employee.

Although 1,200 approved all-employee profit-sharing schemes have been set up since 1978, they have begun to fall into disuse as companies have run out of equity to distribute.

The Government wants companies to be able to offer one free share for every three or five that an employee may buy. Employees in these schemes currently enjoy income tax exemption if they hold the shares for three years.

Companies have been reluctant to issue new shares as this dilutes the value of the existing shares.

Stuart Valentine, head of research at ProShare, the pressure group which has worked closely with the Treasury, said: "We would rather that schemes be operated on a less generous basis than not be operated at all."

The Treasury also said it wants to broaden the appeal of savings-related (SAYE) share-option schemes. There are currently 1,500 schemes in operation, enabling employees to save between £5 and £250 a month in order to buy shares in their company at a prearranged time and price.

The Treasury spokesman said: "We don't want to be over-generous but we do want people to participate. Companies also want their employees to take a stake in the business, but they want to see a real sign of financial commitment from them first. We are looking at ways in which companies can vary the conditions they ask their employees to fulfil before they can enter the scheme."

The Treasury also raised the prospect of extending tax reliefs to unapproved schemes when it said it was exploring ways in which the two types might operate in tandem. Accountants welcomed the move for redressing the balance. In November the Government brought unapproved schemes into pay as you earn (PAYE), leaving some employees with negative incomes for several months.

Companies to be allowed to run personal pension plans

The proposals to extend personal pensions in the same way as wider ownership have encountered studied indifference from the pensions industry.

Mr Major said that the Government would allow people joining a company pension scheme to run their existing personal pension alongside by transferring it to a free-standing additional voluntary contribution (FSAVC).

"At the moment, a self-employed person with a pension scheme cannot go on contributing to that scheme if he joins a company. That is an unfair restriction. We plan to change the rules to allow people to take their pension with them and invest it alongside the company pension.

"Many businesses are simply not big enough to run a company pension scheme and running individual personal pensions for their employees may cost too much in administrative charges. So we are going to relax the rules to allow companies to set up personal pension schemes for groups of employees. Everyone will have their own personal pension, but it will be cheaper for them all."

Although he gave no details, experts presume Mr Major means to allow companies to report employees' earnings direct to the Inland Revenue.

The Prime Minister's third proposal was to allow people to take up their AVCs at any time between 50 and 75.

Daniel Godfrey, of Fleming Investment Trust Management, said: "With over 45 per cent of the population facing financial hardship — that is, retirement on less than £7,200, then allowing people to take their AVC earlier, and making it easier for businesses to set up pension plans are not actions on the scale required."

Joanne Hindle, head of pension development at NatWest Life, said she would be disappointed if the Conservative election manifesto did not contain more wholesale reforms.

Stewart Ritchie, head of product development at Scottish Equitable, said the reforms were incremental. "The jackpot we are waiting for is for the Government to decouple the 17.5 per cent earnings cap on pensions contributions."

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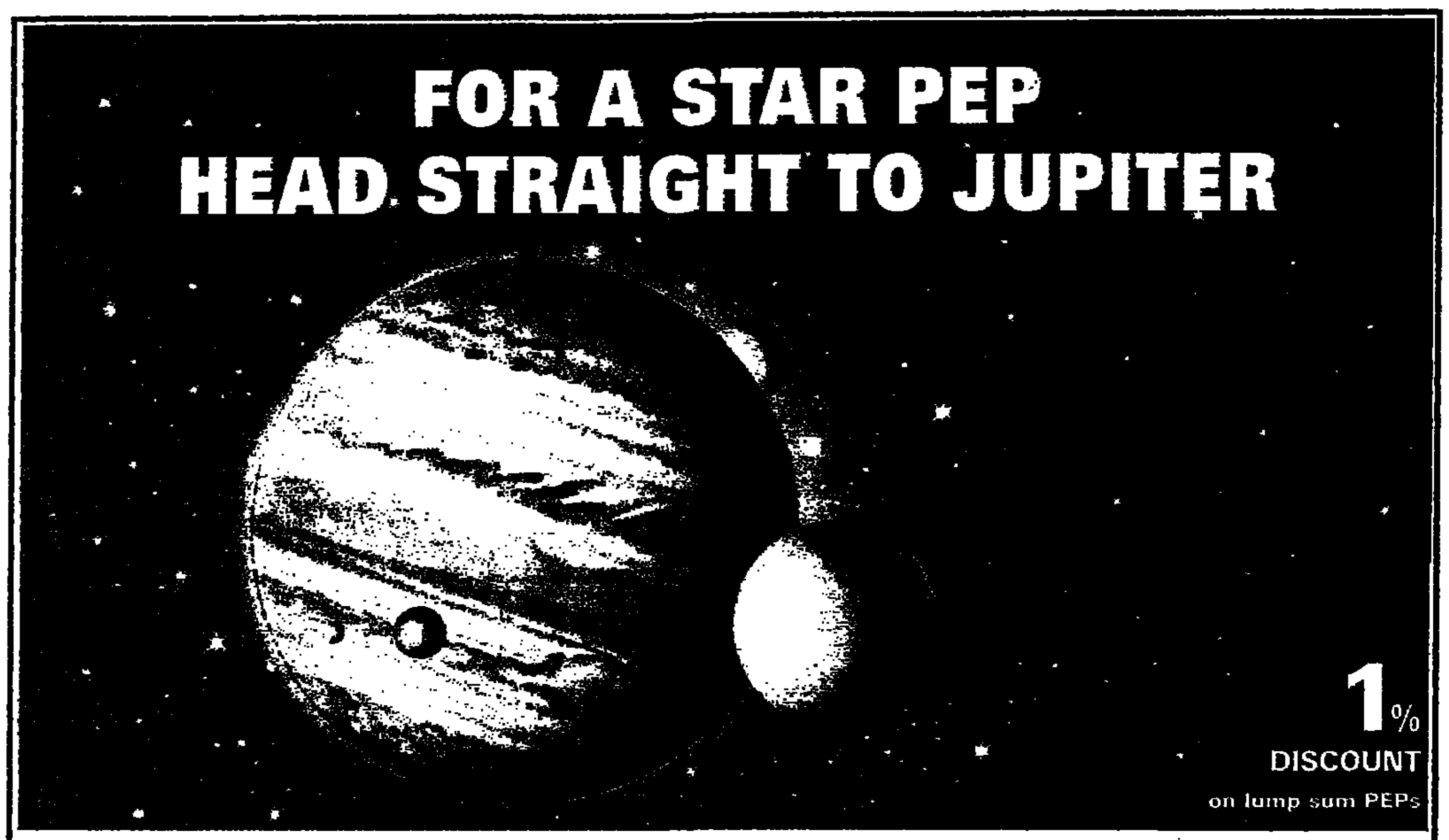

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Perpetual	113	66	59	28	11	8	12	6	4	20
Schroder	68	87	74	27	25	19	22	12	11	13
M&G	80	79	63	36	34	53	46	54	42	22
Barclays Unicorn	69	54	54	64	68	81	72	95	84	61
Mercury	92	115	106	92	85	86	89	69	63	79

Extracts from Investment Intelligence – Group Weighted Performance Tables of all unit trust management groups: cumulative to 1.1.97

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A far from amicable arrangement

COMMENT

ANNE ASHWORTH

Personal Finance Editor

Scottish Amicable is said to have been shocked by the "ungrateful" response to its demutualisation proposals. This reaction shows why the company should pass into the control of Abbey National or another bidder. For if Scottish Amicable directors fail to see why anyone should object to a deal offering generous incentives for executives and meagre payouts to policyholders, then they are unsuited to their role as custodians of investors' cash.

The Amicable Men obviously believed that the complexity of the plan would ensure that it won policyholders' unquestioning approval. Seemingly they did not realise that investors have learnt to smell a rat when faced with insurance company obfuscation. The directors had hoped that policyholders would rejoice in an average bonus of £70 today, with the unsubstantiated promise of more in the next century. Instead policyholders have rebelled at the idea of giving away their ownership of the business for scant reward.

Their resistance to the deal has been aggravated by their disappointment at the recent unsatisfactory investment performance of Scottish Amicable. Some have questioned why the same set of executives who produced poor results in the past should be now be in line for a million pounds apiece for not much extra effort.

In their attempt to portray the scheme as a windfall giveaway, Scottish Amicable flourished figures showing that first bonus payouts for 25-year policies maturing this year could be as high as £1,500. Those who value policies for resale in the second-hand market, however, quickly spied that these examples were misleading. They were based on a basic sum assured of £30,000, six times the average for a policy taken out in 1972 when a typical mortgage was £5,000.

Equally unconvincing were remarks made yesterday by a Scottish Amicable executive implying that, if Abbey National emerged victorious, then homebuyers might need to be concerned that their policies would not repay their loans. Perhaps he intended to alarm policyholders. But he succeeded only in drawing further attention to the less than dazzling investment management skills of his own team.

In the coming weeks, Scottish Amicable policyholders will be called upon to decide between cash and shares now or jam of an uncertain quality tomorrow. Like Harry Enfield's Self Righteous Brothers, they should say a defeaning "No" to the Amicable Men.

Sara McConnell on why some illnesses are treated differently

Annuities check out health

Britain's three million asthma sufferers are among those being targeted by a life company offering better annuity rates to those with certain named diseases and conditions.

Sufferers from cancer, strokes, heart attacks, kidney failure, multiple sclerosis and all types of diabetes will also be offered rates about 5 per cent better than standard by Stalwart Assurance of Dorking. This is the first time asthma and multiple sclerosis sufferers have qualified for special rates.

Stalwart, which already offers better rates to smokers than non-smokers, calculates that it will have to pay out for a shorter time on special annuities because people who qualify will statistically die earlier.

Insurers have to make a bet on how long people will live and consequently how long they will have to pay out, so pay the best rates to those with the shortest life expectancy.

Annuities pay people a guaranteed income for life in return for a lump sum, normally from a pension fund at retirement. Under current pension rules, holders of personal pensions have to buy an annuity with three quarters of their pension fund.

Annuities are big business and the market is worth £4 billion a year. According to Annuity Direct, the independent annuity adviser, at least 5,000 people a week are looking for the best annuity rates.

Mike Fuller, Stalwart's managing director says: "Traditional life companies conveniently ignore the fact that these people are likely to enjoy a shorter retirement than their healthier counterparts and we believe that because of this they should be entitled to a better income in retirement."

But, according to the National Asthma Campaign, asthmatics at least are less likely to die of the condition than they were at the beginning of the decade. The number of people dying of asthma has been dropping steadily throughout the 1990s. The campaign said that better training and better understanding in future will cut the number of deaths further.

Applicants for the special annuity rates will have to fill in a questionnaire that allocates "scores" to different conditions. The worse the condition or combination of conditions, the higher the score and the better the rate. There are no medical checks.

Billy Burrows, of Annuity Direct, said: "Anything that improves rates is welcome, but Stalwart is doing this as a marketing campaign. It is providing higher rates to people who wouldn't qualify for impaired life annuities."

Mr Burrows stresses that anyone with a serious condition should apply for an impaired life annuity from a specialist provider such as the Pension Annuity Friendly Society or Sun Life because they could get a better rate.

Mr Burrows said: "Impaired life annuities rely on medical underwriting, ie. a doctor's report and an underwriter make a decision about an individual's life expectancy. Special annuities are different in that no individual medical underwriting is carried out. The special rate is calculated with reference to the life expectancy of the whole group of sufferers."

Annuity rates, page 42

Humphrey Bogart, a smoker both on and off the screen, died of cancer at 57

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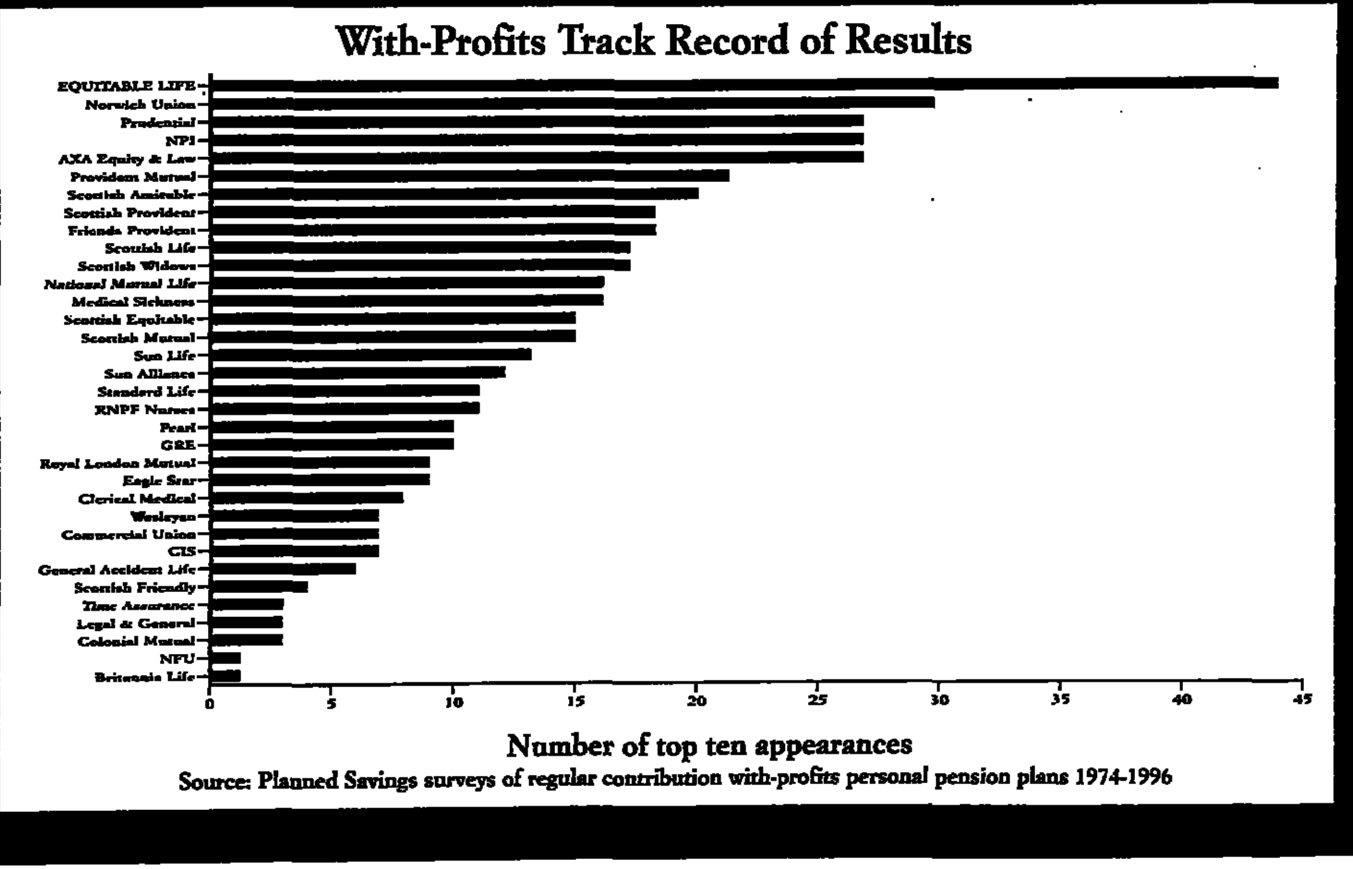

Source: Planned Savings surveys of regular contribution with-profits personal pension plans 1974-1996

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Albanians protest after pyramid schemes collapsed

How to spot a suspect pyramid

Adam Jones assesses new regulations from the DTI

Next Thursday sees new rules come into force to control pyramid selling schemes. In their worst form, pyramid schemes in the UK are clumsy vehicles for fraud. The credulous are asked to pay a membership fee of several thousand pounds on the understanding they will get a slice of subsequent payments from new members they are encouraged to introduce. The fraudsters make off with the money.

In a marginally less awful variation, the people running the scheme stick to their word. The money does pass down through the pyramid, with new recruits making some of the previous initiates wealthy. But when the supply of new members dries up, or when the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) shuts it down, the thing collapses. The fools who joined last, and there can be thousands, get nothing.

The new legislation gives the DTI greater powers to shut down any get-rich-quick operation in which rewards are promised only if new members are recruited. Persuading someone to join such a scheme will become a criminal offence punishable by a two-year prison sentence and/or a £5,000 fine.

The timing of the crackdown is apposite. Albania has been gripped by civil unrest after pyramid savings schemes collapsed. These were based on a similar principle to the notorious money circulation schemes seen in the UK, with ridiculously high rates of interest that could be paid only if new money kept flowing in.

Romania, too, is still trying to sort out a mess caused by the crash of a pyramid savings scheme that attracted £300 million. The boss, given an 18-month sentence, is awaiting trial on further charges of fraud.

Britain has had nothing of this size. Yet it does have legitimate trading schemes that employ pyramid selling techniques.

The schemes may be called network marketing, multilevel franchising or direct selling.

They can include firms where a franchise-holder supplies commission-based sales staff. Other sales operations could have legitimate incentives for recruiting new members.

The DTI has produced a booklet on how to tell a scam from a legal company. The litmus test of a legitimate trading scheme is: does it actually involve the selling of a real product? If it does not, then it is likely to be an outlawed money-circulation scam.

OTHER AREAS TO WATCH

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■ The DTI booklet can be obtained by telephoning 0171 215 0344.

■ Suspected illegal trading schemes should be reported to Consumer Affairs and Policy Directorate 2, The Department of Trade and Industry, 1 Victoria Street, SW1H 0ET.

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Gavin Lumsden inspects today's new offering from M&G

Sophisticated splits

MARK ELLIDGE

The splits may be easy for Darcey Bussell, the ballerina, but investment trust fans should tread with care

Investment trust analysts fear they have found an Achilles' heel in M&G's new High Income trust, whose offer period opens today. The new fund is a split capital trust, a dauntingly complex structure which issues several classes of shares, and has been frequently blighted by poor performance and investor disinterest.

To stimulate investor demand M&G has pulled out all the stops: 6.3 per cent annual income, no initial or exit fees and just a 1 per cent annual management charge. It is also offering shareholders in its Second Dual investment trust, which comes to the end of its life next year, a 3 per cent bonus if they roll over their investment into the new fund.

However, analysts believe the group could be storing trouble for itself in the future with a promise of a high yield of 9.5 per cent for zero dividend preference shareholders.

They fear a potential repeat of the Exmoor Dual investment trust, which has run aground on a combination of poor performance, conflicting shareholder interests and badly drawn up articles of association. The problem with split caps is their sheer complexity. Originating in the zany 1960s the first split caps attempted to please two sets of investors at once.

Income shareholders received all the income from the trust during its life, while capital shareholders received all the capital growth. Since then, product providers have increased the sophistication of splits and added new share classes with weird and wonderful names such as zero dividend preference shares, stepped preference shares and income and residual capital shares.

Zero dividend preference shares, otherwise known as zeros, get their name because they receive no income in the form of dividends but instead get a predetermined capital return. They stand in the front of the queue for assets at a trust's winding-up.

Right behind are the stepped preference shares. These also pay out a predetermined capital return but in addition receive a rising level of income.

Then come the income shares. These offer some of the highest yields in the stock market. Income shares get all the income, minus any going to the stepped preference shares, and some capital. The final two classes of shares in a split cap have no predetermined value and have to feed off the scraps from the other shares' table.

Income and residual capital shares receive a high and rising income and all the surplus assets at wind-up. Their potential for high dividends and capital returns is dependent on the success of the fund manager which makes them a higher risk investment. Finally, there are the capital shares, which take up any remaining capital return. Thankfully, M&G High Income is offering just three shares: zeros, income and capital shares. The zeros will be launched at 20p and are intended to pay back 122.8p in 20 years' time. This is equivalent to a very generous 9.5 per cent annual return. Income shareholders will receive quarterly dividends and a capital repayment of 70p per share in 2017. Capital shareholders have to hope the trust grows at more than 4.19 per cent a year for them to enjoy some growth.

To simplify matters M&G is also offering combinations of the shares in units which can be sheltered in its Pep. The "package unit" is intended to replicate an ordinary share of a conventional investment trust and will comprise one income, one zero and one capital share. Priced at 100p these units are intended to yield an annual income of 5.3 per cent inside a Pep.

For investors willing to take more risk to get a higher income there is the "income and growth unit". This consists of income and growth shares only. Priced at 80p it is aimed to yield 6.3 per cent within a Pep. The risk is that the trust has to achieve over 5 per cent annual compound growth over 20 years to pay back investors all their capital. M&G is confident that it can do this, pointing to a recovery in high-yielding stocks and the fact that its similarly managed Dividend Fund has returned £7,639 of income on a £1,000 investment since 1964.

However, analysts are concerned that the company may have over-egged the pudding, particularly in respect of the 9.5 per cent-yielding zero dividend preference share. Most zeros yield 8-8.5 per cent and the fear is that the High Income trust will face a growing liability as it approaches 2017. This could lead it to experience similar problems to Exmoor Dual if growth is not sufficient over its 20-year life.

The problem with split caps is that they generate potential conflicts of interest between shareholders. The more zero holders get, the less for everybody else. The suspicion is M&G has had to produce an attractive zero to support the income and growth units, which do not include this share.

M&G is not helped either by the fact that other split caps, including its own Equity Capital fund, are offering artificially high yields, boosted by their discounts. If you wish to exploit the potential of split caps why not take one that is already in the market?

Despite their difficulties split cap shares can be useful in long-term financial planning such as arranging for school fees, but use of them always requires financial advice from an independent expert. Contact the Association of Investment Trusts Companies, which publishes a factsheet and monthly data, on 0171 588 5347.

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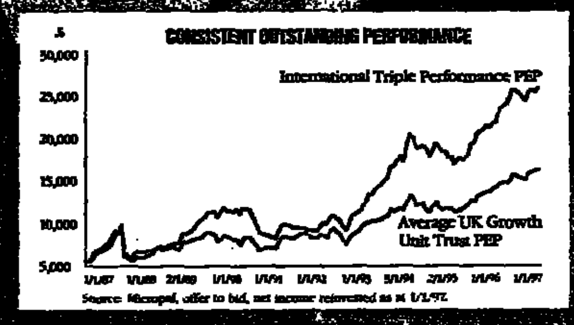

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A new look at trusts with a big fan club

Waiting for F&C to regain its sparkle

TRUST WATCH

IN THE first of a new series putting the focus on unit and investment trusts with large numbers of small investors, Caroline Merrell examines the performance of the £1.9 billion *Foreign & Colonial investment* trust, perhaps the best known in its sector. The trust's chairman and chief investment manager, the man responsible for selecting the investments, is Michael Hart, who has been with the company for 40 years. His retirement this year leaves a question mark over F&C's direction.

William Gladstone had the opportunity of a dabble in F&C

The 130,000 investors in the huge Foreign & Colonial trust — registered in 1879 when William Ewart Gladstone was planning his second term at 10 Downing Street — are beginning to feel dismayed. Over the past 12 months, the share price has fallen by 6.3 per cent. This is in spite of record levels in the British and American stock markets, where almost two thirds of the trust is invested.

Although the net asset value of the trust, reflecting the value of the underlying holdings, has risen by about 5.1 per cent, the fund is now standing at a 14 per cent discount to assets. This means that anyone selling their shares would receive far less than their true value. The trust has also significantly underperformed the sector.

Mr Hart, Foreign & Colonial's chairman, conceded that the performance was "dismal". But he claimed that the fall in the share price was only a short-term problem and said that the UK's biggest investment trust would regain some of its sparkle. Fortunately most investment trust analysts agreed with him.

Mr Hart attributed the poor performance to different factors. Things went awry for the trust's UK holdings — 44 per cent of the fund is invested in UK companies. Mr Hart chose companies that were deemed to pay high yields. Unfortunately, these were not the best-performing companies last year.

He also claimed that the strength of sterling cut returns. The trust is more than 50 per cent exposed to overseas markets — 21 per cent is invested in stocks in the US. Wall Street rose by 25 per cent last year, but the pound's strength drove down these returns to about 15 per cent. Mr Hart said: "In the past, the threat of a Labour government has weakened sterling, not strengthened it."

Japan also proved to be troublesome for the trust — 10 per cent of the fund is held in the shares of Japanese companies — a market that had fallen almost continuously since 1989.

The higher growth companies outperformed. The trust also had a little exposure to the South African market, where returns were hit by the strong pound and the devaluation of the rand.

However, the investors, a mixture of small shareholders and institutions, have the comfort that they have enjoyed good returns over the past few years.

The share price of the £1.9 billion trust over the past five years has increased by 75 per cent, while an index of the 30 top companies would have increased 48 per cent.

Over the past ten years, the share price of the trust has risen by about 175 per cent. The index, meanwhile, has risen 114 per cent.

An investor who put £1,000 in to the trust five years ago would now have £1,891. The same amount invested ten years ago would now be worth £3,206. This amount invested in an average investment trust one year ago would be worth £1,094; five years ago it would be worth £2,184.

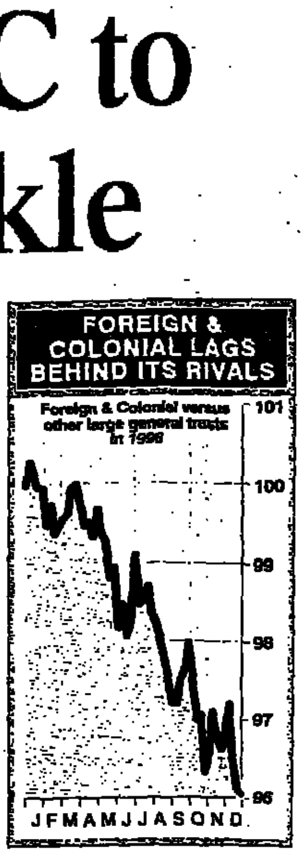
Mr Hart said that the share price fall was caused by institutions selling their holdings. Uncertainty about the investment trust's direction after Mr Hart's retirement knocked confidence. A change in the structure of the Hypo Foreign & Colonial Management, which was 50 per cent owned by the investment trust and 50 per cent owned by Hypo Bank, could have caused some selling of the trust's shares. Hypo Bank now owns 65 per cent of the company and the trust own 35 per cent.

This dip in performance will leave Mr Hart's successor with a tough job.

John Szymanowsky, the investment trust analyst at Warburgs, said: "Obviously Michael Hart is closely associated with the company. However, it does have a depth of management. There is a collegiate system. He would not have made investment decisions on his own."

Among those most tipped to take over is Jeremy Tigue, a director with the company. If he does get the main job, then things will continue pretty much as they have done in the past. Mr Hart said: "Any successor may want to make his mark."

FOREIGN & COLONIAL LAGS BEHIND ITS RIVALS



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Sara McConnell on keeping payouts on ice

Halifax members in Holland must get their skates on to register an address in the UK

Do not lose your society bonus

One false move (such as closing your account) and you can forget any bonus payout from your building society when it becomes a bank.

All the big three converters, the Halifax, Woolwich and Alliance & Leicester, made it clear this week that any saver leaving the fold before flotation day can kiss goodbye to bonuses averaging £1,200.

Equally, any borrowers paying off their mortgage before the vital date can count themselves out of the running for free shares worth between £850 and £900.

Savers, in particular, have had an exhausting time making sure they stick to the plethora of qualifying dates and rules imposed by societies in their impenetrable transfer documents. But even if they have stuck rigidly to all the dates and topped up their balances when told, they must now hold on until flotation day to make sure of the shares.

There is nothing to stop a member withdrawing cash as soon as the last qualifying date has passed. But you must not close your account.

Only members can claim shares. To remain a member of the society you must have at least £1 in your account on vesting day, as flotation day is technically known. But naturally things are not even this simple. If your account has a minimum balance requirement, you must not fall below this. In theory, societies can close your account which would instantly deprive you of your membership, and thus your shares.

The Woolwich showed its human side by saying this week that it would not exercise its right to close accounts. Instead, it would simply start paying a lower rate of interest.

But the Alliance & Leicester and the Halifax have all given warning that that they do reserve the right.

SOCIETY WATCH

[illegible]

- **The Halifax** is set to float in June. Its special general meeting (SGM) is on February 24. This is also the second of the two qualifying dates for receiving a higher payout if you have more than £1,000 in your account. To get the basic payout, you have to have at least £100 in your account on November 25, 1994, and flotation day.

- **The Woolwich** is expected to float in July, with an SGM on February 11, 1997. Basic payouts of 450 shares will go to members with £100 in their accounts on December 31, 1995, and December 31, 1996. Savers with more than £1,000 in their accounts on December 31, 1995, and February 11 will get an extra payout.

- **The Alliance & Leicester** will become a bank in April, unless its plans are put on hold because of the general election. The SGM was in December. Qualifying dates were December 31, 1995, and October 14, 1996. All members will get a flat rate 250 shares.

Overseas it's the address that counts

Overseas members of the Halifax are mystified by the apparently arbitrary choice of "permitted territories" where members will qualify for a payout.

Elaine Halsall, a Weekend Money reader who is working in Holland, was amazed to discover that Dutch residents were excluded from the bonus bonanza, while others living in places as diverse as the United Arab Emirates and Singapore do qualify. Her attempts to clarify the situation were met with a non-committal and uninformative letter.

When *The Times* raised the question, the Halifax argued that Holland had onerous local laws regulating shares and it was not worth complying to pay out a small number of members. But it said Ms Halsall and anyone else in her situation could put themselves in line for payouts by changing to a UK address on their passbooks before the society floats. The Halifax did not see fit to say this to Ms Halsall when she asked it the question directly.

Unfortunately, such an easy solution is not on the cards for the Halifax's 20,000 customers in the Isle of Man and Jersey. After an amendment to Inland Revenue rules in 1990, building societies changed the status of their Channel Islands branches to subsidiaries taking deposits. This immediately deprived customers of membership and thus of payouts.

Weekend Money reader Herbert Campbell, who became a member of the Leeds in 1988, says members were given no notice or explanation of this. He says: "The Leeds was the first building society on the Isle of Man and it opened with a great flourish. Now we are all disenfranchised."

The Halifax, which bought the Leeds in 1994, says its Isle of Man branches have to be set up as subsidiaries because the island's tax rules allow interest gross. The argument seems to be that savers already benefit from gross income so should not also be allowed to claim payouts.

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Hong Kong investors face a bumpy ride

Caroline Merrell considers what might happen after the handover

Fund managers predict that thousands of investors with millions of pounds of money held in Hong Kong are in for a bumpy ride over the next few years, after the change of Hong Kong from British sovereignty to Chinese rule. Investors, however, have little to complain about. They have enjoyed some spectacular returns in recent years.

Investments in some of the better funds have grown more than 300 per cent over the past five years. Company profits in the Hong Kong market have been generated by soaring property prices, corporate activity in banks and investment houses and by commercial activity in the emerging market of China. With 150 days to go before Hong Kong is finally handed back to the Chinese after 100 years of British rule, UK investors must be wondering what they should do with their money.

HSBC Asset Management, part of the Hongkong & Shanghai Banking Corporation, has at least £10 billion invested in Hong Kong. Surprisingly, HSBC has increased its investments in Hong Kong in recent months.

Stella Yiu, HSBC director, said: "The business community is generally optimistic about the future. They have confidence in the new government executive and the Civil Service, and Chris Patten's successor, Tung Chee-hwa. On the political front, businesses feel assured that there will be a good environment to build on. There will be significant momentum in the marketplace. The economic case is now well accepted."

She said that the property market, the most important sector, was still showing healthy returns. In spite of the view that many will flee Hong Kong after July 1, she feels property prices will continue to rise.

Hong Kong parades its cosmopolitan face in fashion week

However, one of the biggest fears about the incoming regime is that the level of corruption is almost bound to increase. In China, paying backhanders to officials is a way of life. Some fund managers believe this practice will spread to Hong Kong after handover.

Seok Teoh, a fund manager with Gartmore, which has £233 million in Hong Kong, said that corruption was almost certain to increase after July, but added: "Everybody is playing the pragmatist on this point. The nature of this corruption will be important to the success or otherwise of Hong Kong." On the future, she said: "Opinion is divided about what the effect will be after the handover. The Americans seem to be quite pessimistic about the immediate future, while they are more optimistic about the longer term. The British seem optimistic about the future both in the long and the short term."

The key to Hong Kong's future will be economic growth in China and stability in Hong Kong, she says.

Social strife created by poverty in China would be extremely detrimental for Hong Kong. Sir Alan Donald, former adviser to a previous Governor of Hong Kong, said: "For economic reasons, China wants to continue to use Hong Kong as a provider of direct and indirect commercial investment."

He added: "Politically, it is just as vital for China to make a smooth transfer of sovereignty in Hong Kong for the sake of the longer-term strategy for Taiwan. China clearly understands the serious harm which would befall its economic development and its desire to reach an accommodation with Taiwan if what is now a unique thriving cosmopolitan centre of capitalism were to be turned into a rubbish heap."

Miss Teoh said: "Perhaps more importantly, the end of the old era will mark the beginning of a new era, which will be psychologically important for the whole of Asia, bringing to an end the humiliation endured in the early part of the century."

In economic terms, the biggest single factor affecting the Hong Kong index is the property market. Most of the biggest quoted companies on the Hang Seng index are property. The biggest financial companies in Hong Kong can also attribute their performance to property, as much of their increase in profits is on the back of an increase in lending.

Miss Teoh said: "A change in interest rates in the US could have a profound effect on the market."

Indices aid for investors

Next month sees the launch of three new indices that should help private investors to get the upper hand when discussing the performance of their portfolios with the stockbrokers who manage them.

To date, investors have been in the dark as to the kind of return they should be expecting. Many private-client stockbrokers have claimed each portfolio is unique, making comparison impossible.

Now FTSE International, the index compiler, and the Association of Private Client and Investment Managers (Apcims) have produced three performance yardsticks for income, growth and balanced funds denominated in sterling. The indices will measure capital and total returns and will be published in the national press, including the *Financial Times*, and the Internet.

Geoffrey Turner of Apcims says the indices, which are based on the average asset allocation of 19 stockbrokers, are primarily aimed at cautious investors but will be useful for those taking a higher risk as well.

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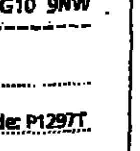

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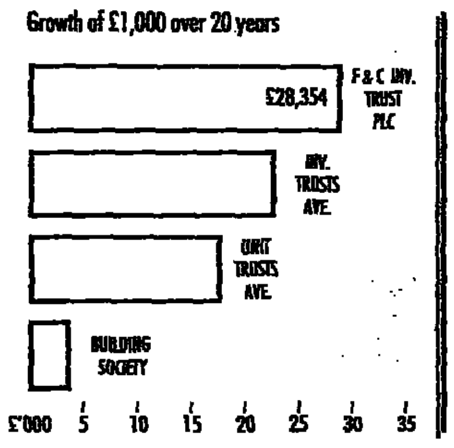

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Sara McConnell finds the door closing on errant borrowers

Lenders get tough with new debt code

Lenders this week signalled their renewed determination to get tough with borrowers who think they can walk away from their mortgage debts and not be chased for the money they owe.

During the housing slump, thousands of borrowers in trouble with mortgage repayments either had their homes repossessed or handed their keys back to lenders in desperation as the value of their properties plunged and interest rates soared. More recently a number of companies have been making money by wrongly advising borrowers with negative equity that they could hand back their keys and not be pursued for their debts. According to the latest repossession figures from the Council of Mortgage Lenders published this week, more than a quarter of the 18,460 homes repossessed in the second half of last year were so called "voluntary repossessions".

Lenders have been slow to act against borrowers in debt, partly because they knew many did not have the money to pay. But they were also taken by surprise by the scale of the housing meltdown.

Now the Council of Mortgage Lenders has issued a three-point code that spells out for the first time borrowers' liability to pay any shortfall still owing on the mortgage if their home is repossessed or sold. Lenders have up to 12 years to pursue errant borrowers through the courts. They have even longer to recover the money directly by tracking down borrowers, who are expected to keep their lender up to date with changes of address and circumstances.

Failure to do this could result in calls or visits from private investigators or tracing agents. The code says that borrowers who fail to negotiate or stick to repayment agreements can expect court action against them.

Lenders are making more use of private investigators to chase borrowers whose circumstances they believe have improved as the economy picks up. They claim they use agents who are members of the Credit Services Association, the debt collectors' trade body. CSA monitors and disciplines its members. But John Harris of NGS Corporate Services, whose co-director, Nick Brown, is president of the CSA, said: "The building societies have really got with it over the last five years. Before they had never had the problem of negative equity and people were dropping their keys back and not leaving any forwarding address. And societies went out into the industry and recruited all these shady private detectives. They were totally unprepared."

Debts may pile up but lenders are taking firmer action

Why bankrupts may have to give up their pensions

Bankrupts who have been discharged in the past ten years may be forced to forfeit their pensions to repay remaining debts.

Those who have been released from their two to three-year period of bankruptcy had good reason to believe that their pensions would be safe from the trustee in bankruptcy, the official who deals with a bankrupt's affairs.

Now former bankrupts who are already drawing their pensions may be forced to hand them over to their creditors. There have been 185,000 bankruptcies since 1986.

The development follows a High Court case in December 1996. As *The Times* revealed, the Landau judgment made it clear for the first time that personal pensions could be seized by the trustee in bankruptcy. It has now emerged that anyone who has been discharged without clearing their debts since the Insolvency Act 1986 could be compelled to give up their pension. Members of company pension schemes, however, will be protected as the Pensions Act 1996 prevents company pensions from passing into the control of the trustee in bankruptcy.

Ian Greenstreet, pensions specialist at Simmons & Simmons, a City legal firm, said that the Landau ruling would affect those who had personal pensions when they succumbed to their debts and chose to go bankrupt.

He added: "The trustee in bankruptcy is under a legal duty to maximise the potential recovery for the bankrupt's creditors. Often these creditors are small businessmen themselves who, at best, will only recover a few pence of every £1 of debt they were owed. The pension may be the only significant asset left."

Ted Wacey, head of the bankruptcy department at Buchler Phillips, said: "The Landau case will make it considerably easier to obtain both the lump sum paid on retirement under a personal pension and any future pension payments."

The Government has defended its decision to treat company schemes more favourably on the ground that those with personal pensions are entitled to contribute a higher percentage of their earnings. However, it seems unlikely that any small businessman facing bankruptcy would be able to show sufficient profits to pay large amounts into a personal pension.

The Association of British Insurers, the trade body that represents personal pension companies, has contacted the Department of Social Security, arguing for equal treatment of company and personal pensions.

ANNE ASHWORTH

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Halifax Liquid Gold	2.45%	2.45%	2.95%	2.95%	3.25%	3.25%	3.50%	3.50%
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Source: Moneyfacts 14th January 1997

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Martin Waller continues his informative tour of the stock market

The way they were: the London Stock Exchange floor of the 1960s was a hive of activity as stockbrokers went about their daily business in a computerless trading world

A share of the action at a price

By the end of this year, millions will have become private investors for the first time through the conversion of financial institutions into quoted companies. *Last* week, we looked at dividends and the calendar. In the second of a five-part series on the stock market, we consider the mechanics of share ownership.

Stock market players, even those who do so in a limited way by owning two or three privatisation stocks, are always concerned to track the value of their investments. Many turn to the stock market pages every day *to monitor their share prices.* This is not strictly necessary — big name stocks do not move around much, even if the disastrous falls of the likes of British Gas over the past year might not inspire confidence. Checking prices is a pleasant ritual, all the same.

The City has an electronic network of screens that notify dealers of second-by-second moves *in the value of* investments. Share price tables, as published daily in most newspapers, are not quite so up to date. But they can be informative, over and above giving the price at 4.30pm the previous day, when the stock market officially closes.

In *The Times* every day you will learn of the highest and lowest point each share has reached over the previous year, plus a couple of key performance indicators, the **price/earnings ratio** and the **dividend yield.** In addition, our Monday pages tell you what the price did over the previous week, and give the **market capitalisation** — the total value of all the shares *added up, and so the price the* City puts on the whole company. No paper can quote the price of every share — there are simply too many. But *The Times* is unique in that, every Monday, it publishes a table of *shares on the* **Alternative Investment Market,** the junior *market for companies with a* less developed track record.

BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO THE STOCK MARKET

Two points about those share prices. A reader rang me seeking guidance some years ago. *In the course of our* conversation it became obvious that he thought the City and the financial press made up the prices between them, based on their views of the companies at any given time! *They in fact come from the* Stock Exchange and represent recent deals between City investors *and the prices* at which those deals are struck.

Secondly, the single figure given is an average of the buying and selling prices, the difference between which is the spread. Say your share is priced at £4. If you are buying, the stockbroker might charge you 405p for each share; if you are selling, he offers you 395p. The difference is his profit.

The size of the spread varies. In big, well-established companies such as the privatisation stocks, it can be quite small, because there is a ready market. Smaller stocks may not be so easy to find buyers for, so the *spread* is wider, minimising the dealer's risk.

SHARE-DEALING MADE EASY FOR THE PRIVATE INVESTOR

As a private investor you are not required to *deal through the big City firms;* indeed, many do not want your custom. They tend to have minimum limits on the amount of investors' cash they will handle, and you will almost certainly fall well below these.

A not-so-funny City story, possibly apocryphal, illustrates this. A well-heeled individual is said to have had some £120,000 to invest. He took it to a City firm that specialised in private-client work and told them to put it into shares of their choosing for him. Through spectacularly bad judgment the broker managed to lose much of *the money; within a few months* the various investments were worth a total of £90,000 between them. At this stage, the broker sold them and returned a cheque for this sum *to the client,* explaining that they did not deal with investors with less than £100,000.

You should be able to deal in shares easily and cheaply through your high street bank. Alternatively, there are cheap share-dealing operations *that specialise in* handling matters for the private shareholder.

They include Sharelink, whose helpline is 0121 200 7788, and the Share Centre in Tring, Hertfordshire, freephone 0800 800008. Alternatively, the Yorkshire Building Society has a scheme called Yorkshare, on 01274 737373, and *another building society, the Norwich and* Peterborough, owns the Waters Luniss stockbroker, on 01603 622265.

SHARE CERTIFICATES AND THE [illegible]

Certificates are fast becoming a thing of the past. In the stock market's infancy, every document denoting ownership of an investment was written in quill pen and passed on by hand. Ownership *of the investment passed* with that slip of paper, without question. The opportunities for theft, forgery, embezzlement, whatever, enriched many a rogue.

With the coming of the typewriter, *matters improved, but it* was still ownership of that piece of paper that conveyed control. The Stock Exchange *is* currently switching to an entirely paperless electronic system, called Crest, though you can still have share certificates if you prefer. The changeover has not been a happy one, and *there are doubts whether the spring deadline for full transition will be met.*

This year's Big Four, the three building societies and the Norwich Union, say that it is too soon to say whether they will be issuing paper certificates *to their new armies of* shareholders. The betting must be that whatever happens in the City, pieces of paper bestowing ownership of a company will still be issued. Crest is far too expensive for *the average small investor.* The firms listed above will be happy to take your paper.

Next week we look at the annual general meeting each company is required by law to call, and what *you can learn from your* report and accounts.

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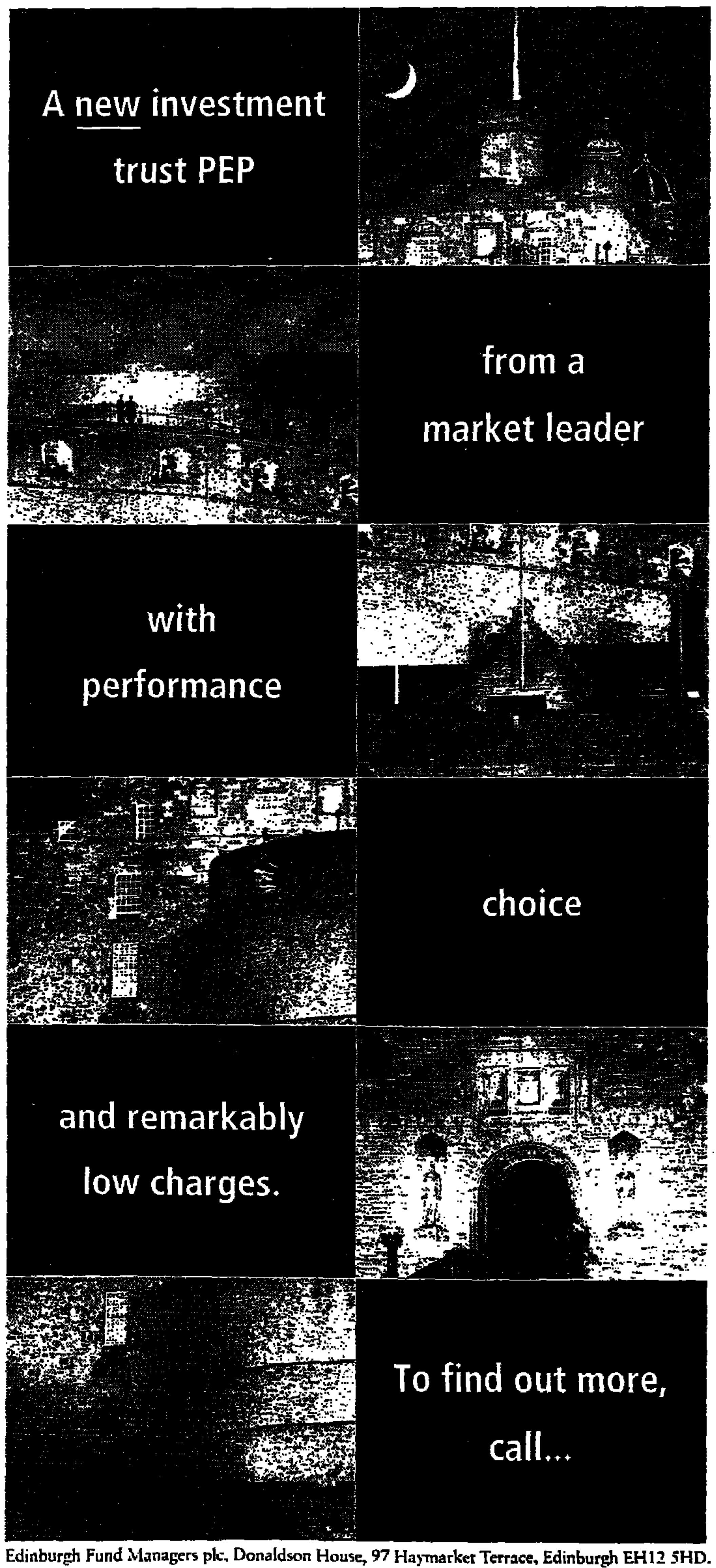

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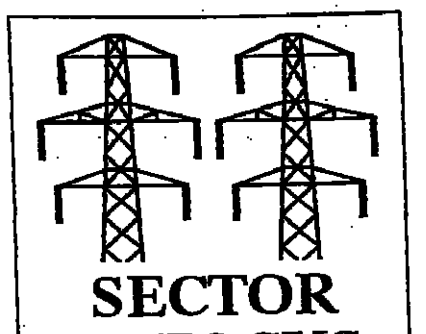
Worried by the watchdog and the windfall tax

Generators face a big squeeze on prices, writes Matthew Wall



SECTOR IN FOCUS

Another regulatory cold wind blew through the electricity sector last week, exacerbating the jitters caused by the prospect of a windfall tax. Stephen Littlechild, Director-General of Electricity Supply, said he was still dissatisfied with the level of competition in electricity generation. Unless wholesale electricity prices continue falling, regulatory intervention is sure to follow. Needless to say, this would be would be bad news for investors in National Power and PowerGen, the two dominant generators.

Since privatisation of electricity in 1990, Professor Littlechild has tried strenuously to loosen the generators' hold over wholesale electricity prices. Given that they owned most of the power stations that set the prices in the electricity pool, they had a virtual licence to print money.

As such, Professor Littlechild forced them to sell 6,000 megawatts of generating capacity. Eastern Group, the regional electricity company owned by Hanson, scooped the lot last year, boosting its generation market share to a potential 14 per cent. As part of the breakup of Hanson, Eastern is merging with Hanson's US coal business, Peabody, to form Energy Group, which is aiming for a stock market listing by the end of next month. National Power and PowerGen, meanwhile, have seen their market share fall from 80 per cent at privatisation to 45 per cent now. Despite this, both companies' share prices have been remarkably resilient, reflecting vigorous cost-cutting, share buybacks and special dividends after their bids for regional electricity companies were blocked by Ian Lang, the Trade Secretary.

But City analysts are now divided over the prospects for the companies. Adam Forsyth, electricity analyst at NatWest Markets, believes falling pool prices will deter new entrants to the generation market and this will mean less competition for the market leaders.

Meanwhile, increased demand for electricity, driven partly by the increasing use of computers and air-conditioning systems required to keep them cool, will keep generating capacity growing at 3 per cent a year.

Mr Forsyth says: "National Power and PowerGen will get the lion's share of this growth since they have the spare capacity that they can wheel out when needed." Both companies are also witnessing strong overseas growth, especially in the Far East, where fast-growing economies are particularly thirsty for power. Europe, too, presents significant opportunities after EU moves to introduce competition into the power markets of member states.

Germany, for example, has the highest electricity prices in Europe, leaving plenty of room for UK generators to wade in and undercut the incumbent power companies. But this month PowerGen pulled out of takeover talks with Bewag, the Berlin-based electricity distributor, because shareholders Veba and Viag would retain too much influence for PowerGen's liking.

Nick Pink, electricity analyst at SBC Warburg, is far more bearish, however. He says: "If pool prices fall a further 5 per cent to 10 per cent in real terms over the next few years as predicted, on top of 5 per cent last year, both generators are bound to suffer. And Littlechild is also sure to intervene if he continues to believe there is not enough competition. National Power is overvalued and we recommend selling. We have PowerGen as a hold."

The third biggest generator, British Energy, formed after the merger between Nuclear Electric and Scottish Nuclear, is particularly prone to falling pool prices. It has no choice but to accept the prevailing price since nuclear power stations have to produce electricity whatever the weather.

As its share price has rallied significantly to above 150p since its miserable stock market debut last summer, when it fell to 89p, most analysts recommend taking profits now.

PowerGen's share price has remained resilient since privatisation, but could be hit if the regulator intervenes

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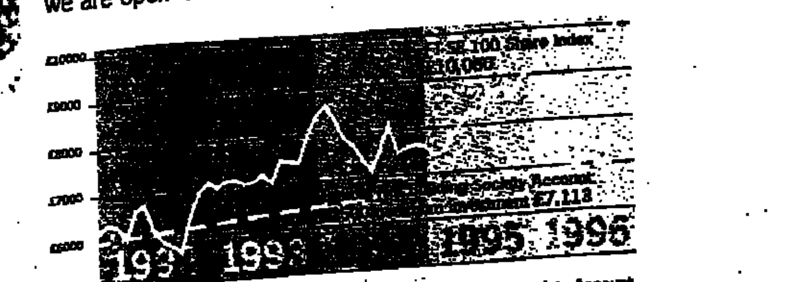

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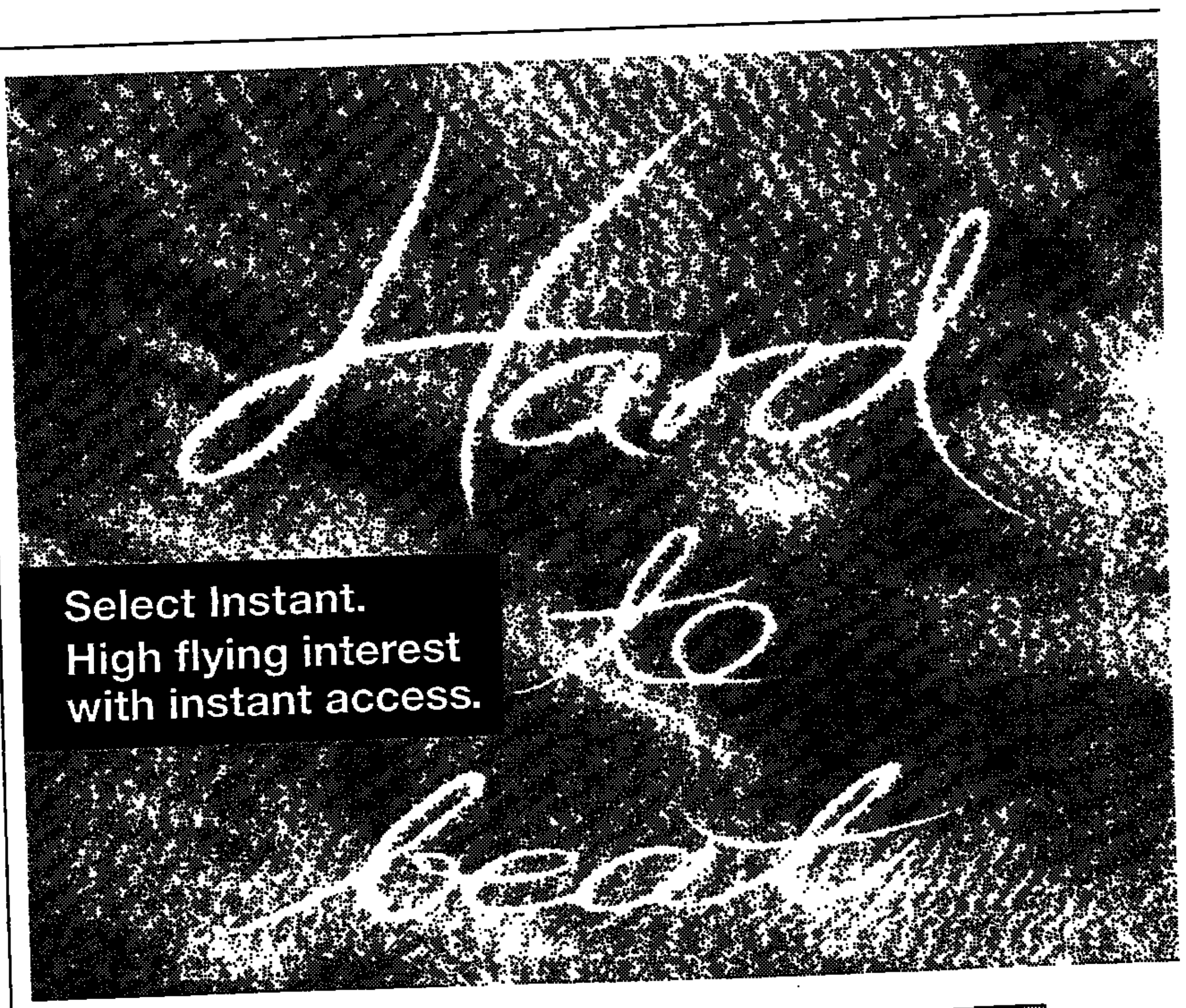
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£50,000+	6.45	5.16	6.20	4.96
£25,000+	6.40	5.12	6.15	4.92
£5,000+	6.35	5.08	6.10	4.88

NR
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www.nrock.co.uk
Member of the Building Societies Association.
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CR92

Rates are correct at 20.1.97 but may vary. The circumstances in which the rates may vary are described in our Select Accounts Terms and Conditions and Charges leaflet. It is important to note that whilst investors opening a Select Instant Account will be investing members of the Society, they will not thereby become entitled to vote on and to receive benefits in connection with the Society's proposed conversion to a public limited company listed on the London Stock Exchange, unless they satisfy the relevant conditions. *Interest will be paid after deduction of income tax at the lower rate (currently 20%) or, subject to the required certification, gross. Where the tax deducted exceeds an investor's tax liability (if any), a claim may be made to the Inland Revenue for repayment of tax. For individuals whose income falls within the lower rate band, the tax deducted will match their liability to tax on the interest and they will have no more tax to pay on it. Individuals who are liable at the higher rate of income tax of 40% will have to pay additional tax on the interest to cover the difference between the tax deducted and the higher rate tax due. Account balances below £5,000 will receive interest at the prevailing basic savings rate. Interest is not paid on balances below £50, unless the account holder is registered as being under 22 years of age. The account is for personal use only and is open to permanent UK residents. Full written terms and conditions will be sent with your application form. Following receipt of your completed application form, your confirmation slip will usually be sent to you within five full working days. Select Instant is a Share Account. Opening an account is subject to status and identification will be required. Minimum investment £5,000. Maximum holding with the Society £500,000.

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THE TIMES MONEY INFORMATION SERVICE

Retirement advice targets women

AS WOMEN live on average six years longer than men and are likely to spend up to seven years off work on career breaks, a larger pension fund and higher pension contributions are needed to compensate. To heighten awareness of *the need for immediate retirement* planning by women, Midland Bank is launching a free cassette guide giving financial and pension advice. Call 0800 656565.

■ Two guides, *Management Buyouts for Managers* and *Selling Unquoted Companies*, have been published by Livingstone Guarantee, the corporate financial adviser. The first looks at the ingredients for a successful management buyout and the buying process itself. The second offers advice for anyone considering selling a private business, detailing the entire sale procedure from planning to steering the deal to completion. Call 0171-388 4242.

■ Cheshire Building Society today launches a fixed-rate bond. The minimum investment for the bond, which matures on June 30, 1998, is £5,000. Annual interest for investments of less than £25,000 is 6.75 per cent gross (monthly interest 6.50 per cent) and the interest for investments of £25,000 to a maximum £500,000 is 7 per cent gross (monthly interest 6.75 per cent). Call 0800 243 278.

■ For savers interested in receiving a guaranteed fixed rate of return, Portman Building Society has two such savings products on offer. The one-year fixed-interest bond rate is 6.60 per cent gross and the five-year step-up bond return starts at 6.50 per cent gross in year one, rising in tiers to 10 per cent gross in year five. The minimum investment is £500. Call 0800 663663.

■ The Association of Solicitor Investment Managers (ASIM) has published its *1997 Directory of Members* providing details of 50 full and associate members, plus guidance on how to choose an investment adviser. Call 01892 870065.

■ A national register of solicitors who are independent financial advisers offering one-stop financial and legal advice can now be accessed. Call Solicitors for Independent Financial Advice: 01372 721172, web site: http://www.sifa.co.uk

LIZANNE ROSE

SAVERS' BEST BUYS

INSTANT ACCESS ACCOUNTS	Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
Portman BS 01202 292444	Instant Acc	Instant	£100	4.70	Yly
Northern Rock BS 0500 505000	Select Inst	Postal	£5,000	6.35	Yly
Bristol & West BS 0800 901109	Instnt Postal	Postal	£10,000	6.40	Yly
Northern Rock BS 0500 505000	Select Inst	Postal	£50,000	6.45	Yly

NOTICE ACCOUNTS & BONDS	Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
Chelsea BS 0800 132351	POST-tel 20	20 day p	£5,000	6.05	Yly
First National BS 0800 558844	30 Day Notice	30 day p	£10,000	6.30	Yly
Northern Rock BS 0500 505000	Select 60	60 day p	£10,000	6.50	Yly
Manchester BS 0161 833 8898	Jubilee	75 day	£25,000	6.75	Yly

FIRST TESSAS (TAX FREE)	Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
Sun Banking Corp 01438 744505	Fixed	5 year	£8,575	7.50	F/Yly
NatWest Bank 0800 200400	Fixed	5 year	£5,000	7.45	F/Yly
Investec Bank (UK) 0171 6260879	Premier	5 year	£9,000	7.20	Yly
West Bromwich BS 0990 143668		5 year	£3,000	7.00	Yly

CREDIT CARDS BEST BUYS

CREDIT CARDS	Card type	Interest per month	APR%	Fee per annum
Co-operative Bank 0800 109000	*Advantage Visa*	0.64%NC	7.90%N	Nil
RBS Advanta 0800 077770	Visa	0.79%N	9.90%N	Nil
Capital One Bank 0800 669000	Visa	0.797%N	9.90%N	Nil

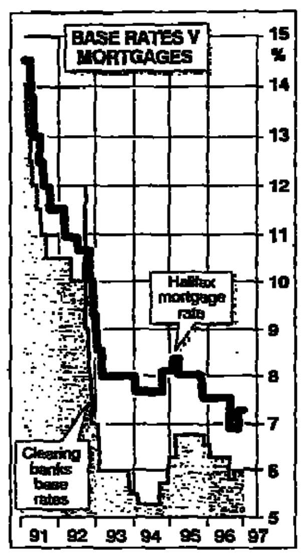
PERSONAL LOANS BEST BUYS

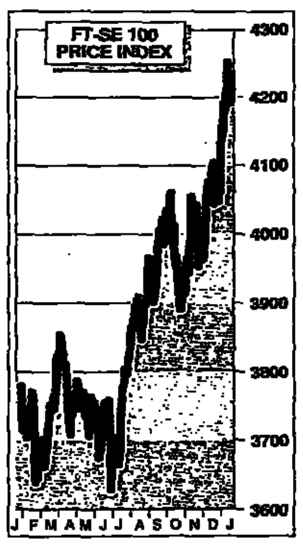
PERSONAL LOANS	APR	Monthly payment on £3,000 for 3yrs with insurance	no insurance
Northern Rock BS 0345 421421	12.90%H	£112.66	£102.59
Lombard Direct 0800 215000	13.90%A	£120.02	£101.20
RBS Direct 0800 121125	*14.00%*	£114.78	£101.45

Nb. A = APR dependent on credit rating, C = no interest free period, F = Fixed Rate (all other rates variable), H = Higher rate applies if insurance not arranged, N = Introductory rate for a limited period, P = By Post only.

* RATES SHOWN ARE GROSS AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE
PLEASE CHECK RATES BEFORE INVESTING

Source: MoneyFacts, the Monthly Guide to Investment & Mortgage Rates (01692 500 677)





NATIONAL SAVINGS

	Gross rate	At tax rates 20%	40%	Min/maximum investmnt £	Notice	Contact
Ordinary A/c¹	1.50	1.20	0.90	10-10,000**		0645 645000
Investment A/c*	4.75	3.80	2.85	20-500***	1mth	0645 645000
Income Bond*	6.00	4.80	3.60	2,000-25,000**	3mth	0645 645000
First Opt Bond	6.00	4.80	3.60	1,000-20,000**		0645 645000
43rd Issue Cert†	5.35			100-10,000	8day	0645 645000
Children's Bond†	6.75			25-1,000	1mth	0645 645000
Gen Ext Rate	3.51					0645 645000
Capital Bond	6.65	5.32	3.99	100-250,000	8day	0645 645000
9th Index Linked†	2.50			100-10,000	8day	0645 645000
Pensnrs Bond S3	7.00	5.60	4.20	500-50,000	60day	0645 645000

*¹ first £70 (£140 jt) of int tax free, inst accs for up to £100 · Additional hldgs up to £20,000 for reinvested proceeds †Tax free *Rates gross and vble ‡Guaranteed when held for 5 years *0.2% net bonus for £20,000+ *£100,000 jt in addition to S1 and S2 holdings *Taxable but cred in full *£500-100,000 earn higher rates. **Tiered rates apply.*

PENSION ANNUITIES

All figures are the gross annual annuity (£100,000 purchase), guaranteed 5 years, paid monthly in advance

SINGLE LIFE (level ann)	Male: Age 60	Age 65	Age 70
Standard Lf ....Level	£ 9,776	£10,844	£12,248
Equitab Lf............Level	£ 9,905	£10,824	£12,027
Prudential..............Level	£ 9,750	£10,781	£12,189
*Stalwart * ....Level*	£ 9,730	£10,781	£11,893
Sun Life ....Level	£ 9,636	£10,747	£12,249

SINGLE LIFE	Female: Age 60	Age 65	Age 70
Prudential ....Level	£9,092	£ 9,846	£10,948
Canada Life ....Level	£8,948	£9,757	£10,943
*Stalwart * ....Level*	£8,815	£ 9,717	£10,595
Equitable Lf..........Level	£8,971	£ 9,658	£10,617
Sun Lf of Can.......Level	£8,913	£ 9,658	£10,751

JOINT LIFE, 2/3 WIDOWS (level annuity)	*Male: Age 60* Female: Age 55	*Age 65* Age 60	*Age 70* Age 65
*Stalwart * ....Level*	£8,620	£9,307	£10,080
Prudential ....Level	£8,654	£9,245	£10,075
Equitable Lf..........Level	£8,660	£9,186	£ 9,908
Canada Life ....Level	£8,520	£9,140	£10,020
Sun Lf of Can.......Level	£8,534	£9,113	£9,936

** Maximum purchase £100,000. Higher rates for smokers.*
Source: Annuity Direct (0171 588 9393)

Compiled by: Lizanne Rose

GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS

ANNUAL INCOME

Rates as at January 30, 1997

Investment (£)	Company	Standard Rate (%)
1 Year		
1,000	Hambro Assured	4.00
5,000	Financial Assur	5.30
10,000	*AIG Life*	*5.40*
20,000	AIG Life	5.55
50,000	Financial Assur	5.65
2 Years		
1,000	Hambro Assured	4.95
3,000	ITT London & Edin	6.20
3 Years		
1,000	Hambro Assured	5.20
3,000	ITT London & Edin	6.30
4 Years		
1,000	Hambro Assured	5.60
3,000	ITT London & Edin	6.35
5 Years		
1,000	Hambro Assured	5.70
3,000	ITT London & Edin	6.70

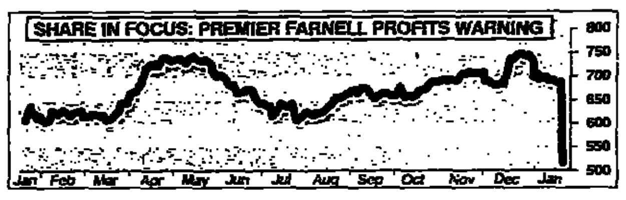
Source: Chamberlain de Broë 0171-434 4222. Net rates. Income and capital guaranteed. *Early surrender. Terms vary. Monthly income may be available.*

PIBS

FIXED RATE	Gross coupon	Buying price	% Gross yield	Issue price	Minimum purchase amount
Birmingham Midshires	9.375%	104.06	8.999	100.17	1,000
Bradford & Bingley	11.625%	127.59	9.111	100.13	10,000
Bradford & Bingley	13.000%	142.29	9.136	100.20	10,000
Bristol & West	13.375%	148.30	9.019	100.34	1,000
Britannia	13.000%	141.68	9.176	100.42	1,000
Coventry	*12.125%*	*135.41*	*8.924*	*100.75*	*1,000*
First National	11.750%	126.62	9.279	100.25	10,000
Halifax	8.750%	100.58	8.699	100.62	50,000
Halifax	12.000%	135.29	8.558	100.28	50,000
Halifax	13.625%	155.32	8.772	100.00	50,000
Leeds & Holbeck	13.375%	148.79	8.989	100.23	1,000
Newcastle	10.750%	120.85	8.878	100.32	1,000
Newcastle	12.625%	142.05	8.888	100.45	1,000
Northern Rock	*12.625%*	*142.53*	*8.858*	*100.14*	*1,000*
Skipton	12.875%	143.26	8.987	100.48	1,000

FLOATING RATE	Gross coupon	Buying price	Issue price	Minimum purchase
Cheshire (28/09-27/03)	*8.41563%*	111.00	100.00	1,000
First Nat(20/09-20/03)	8.48750%	101.50	100.00	1,000

PIBS = Permanent interest-bearing shares
Source ABN AMRO Hoare Govett — 0171 601 0101



LARGER LENDERS

Lender	Interest rate %	Loan size	Max %	Notes
Building Societies				
Alliance & Leic 0181 742 0471	*4.25*	*to £250k*	*90*	*3% discount to 1.1.98*
Birm Mid Mort SVS 01344 394000	3.21	£100k+	75	4% disc-31.8.97 2% disc-28.2.99
Nationwide 0800 302010	3.09	to £500k	75	3.90% discount for 1 year
Banks				
Bank of Ireland 01734 510100	1.24	£20-145k	95	6.25% disc-6 mth 3% disc-6 months
Midland 0800 494999	3.99	£100k+	80	3% discount for 12 months

LARGER LOANS

Lender	Interest rate %	Loan size	Max %	Notes
Building Societies				
Scarborough 0800 590547	0.25	£30-100k	95	6.99% disc-6mth 2%-6mth,0.5%-1y
Standard 0191 257 4123	1.49	to £100k	80	6% discount for 12 months
Mansfield 01246 202055	0.64	£75-125k	90	6.35% disc-6mth 2%-6mth,1%-1yr
Banks				
Bank of Ireland 01734 510100	1.24	£20-145k	95	6.25%dsc-6 mth *3% dsc-6 mth*
Midland Bank 0800 494999	4.15	£50-100k	95	3% discount for 1 year

FIRST-TIME BUYERS

Lender	Interest rate %	Loan size	Max %	Notes
Building Societies				
Bristol & West 0800 119955	3.50	£15k+	95	3.75% discount for 12 months
Newbury 01635 43676	3.99	£15-150k	95	3% discount for 12 months
Lambeth 0171 928 1331	3.99	£15-150k	95	3.25% discount for 12 months
Banks				
Bnk of Ireland 01734 510100	1.24	£20-145k	95	6.25% disc 6 mths 3% disc 6 mths
TSB Bank 0500 758000	3.51	£15k+	95	3.74% discount for 12 months

Larger lenders, larger loans and first-time buyers tables by Blay's Guides. (01753 880482)

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WEEKEND MONEY LETTERS

Move to taxation self-assessment may prove to be a reform too far

From Mr L. How

Sir, I was surprised to read solicitor Susan Singleton's letter in your issue of January 11, suggesting taxpayers should complete their own tax returns, and trust to the Inland Revenue to calculate the tax. This is by early submission not "on time", as she implies.

I dealt with the Revenue daily, and calculate that up to half the assessments issued by them are wrong. These are assessments based on accounts or returns submitted. Most mistakes, needless to say, are in the Revenue's favour.

I can also tell, by speaking to the Revenue staff who will be dealing with the returns, that they are largely untrained as yet, as they profess ignorance of the basics.

"Self-assessment" involves reform of the very basis of assessment, and not just the forms used. In many cases, there are transitional adjustments to make to arrive at the figures to put on the 1997 tax returns..

I agree the untrained can complete their own returns, but equally, they can do their own conveyancing and draft their own wills. As in taxation, errors may be costly, and may not have their effect for years to come.

My advice is to have a professional involved, for this year at least. I fear a shambles. This may be a reform too far.

Yours faithfully,
LAWRENCE HOW
(Ex-tax inspector),
13 Wood Street,
Penarth,
Vale of Glamorgan.

Avoid the scramble for Halifax shares

From Mr J. Talbot

Sir, Mr S. Lourie, of the Halifax Action Group, writes about the alleged wrongs being done to future Halifax shareholders who wish to sell their shares on the day they are issued (Weekend Money Letters, January 4). He argues "members . . . should get the benefit of any scramble for shares by the financial institutions". Of course, he means only those who wish to sell. Other members, who wish to add to their shareholdings, would be among the losers.

There seems to be no logic in a procedure that rewards those who do not intend to be long-term shareholders and does nothing for those that do. Far better to avoid an artificial "scramble for shares" and let the proper value be established over a few days.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN TALBOT,
21 Knollys House,
Tavistock Place, WC1.

Putting trust in the insurers

INSURANCE
Times readers cast nasturtiums on Insurance Companies
GED

From Mr R. Breckman

Sir, You recently published a letter of mine bemoaning the standards of service given by the insurance companies, where, for example, an assessor did not even bother to inspect property damaged by storm, but still accepted the claim.

Subsequently, I passed the papers to the Insurance Ombudsman who has since awarded me £250 compensation. This casts considerable aspersions upon the insurance companies in that they refuse consistently to accept responsibility — and it was only intervention by the ombudsman that got me justice.

By having an ombudsman paid for by the insurance companies, they are effectively admitting that all is not as it should be in their business. Can they really be trusted?

Yours faithfully,
ROBERT BRECKMAN,
Breckman & Company,
Chartered Accountants,
49 South Molton Street,
London W1.

Annuity overhaul is long overdue

From Mr A. Simmonds

Sir, Mr R. Ranson of Equitable Life gives a fairly reasonable explanation in Weekend Money Letters (January 11) of the investment underlying an annuity, which means that the insurance companies may not make massive profits on annuities, though they certainly would if the cash sum was invested in permanent interest bearing shares (Pibs). The return here, is not far short of the effective yield on an annuity for a male aged 65 — around 9 per cent compared with the approximate 11 per cent on the annuity. This raises the more fundamental question of why the Government requires individuals to buy annuities, possibly depriving our heirs of a large capital sum. If I die, my widow gets a pension of two thirds or even half in some cases and my children will get nothing. Why do I not have the option to put my lump sum into gilts or Pibs, or similar funds? It is certainly understandable why the conversion of the lump sum into an annuity was arguably prescribed, to prevent the dissolution of funds, and, with the present trend towards more and more private provision for one's old age, the last thing any government will want is to allow people to fritter away their accumulated pension fund.

However, it is time this archaic system was overhauled to permit choices on retirement. Those who have large pension fund accumulations should surely be permitted to invest at least a portion in equities, even if the majority should go into "safe" places such as gilts, deposits or Pibs. If, when I come to retire, I have a capital sum on which a Pibs return is adequate for me, why should I not be free to opt for that, so that my capital remains intact for my heirs?

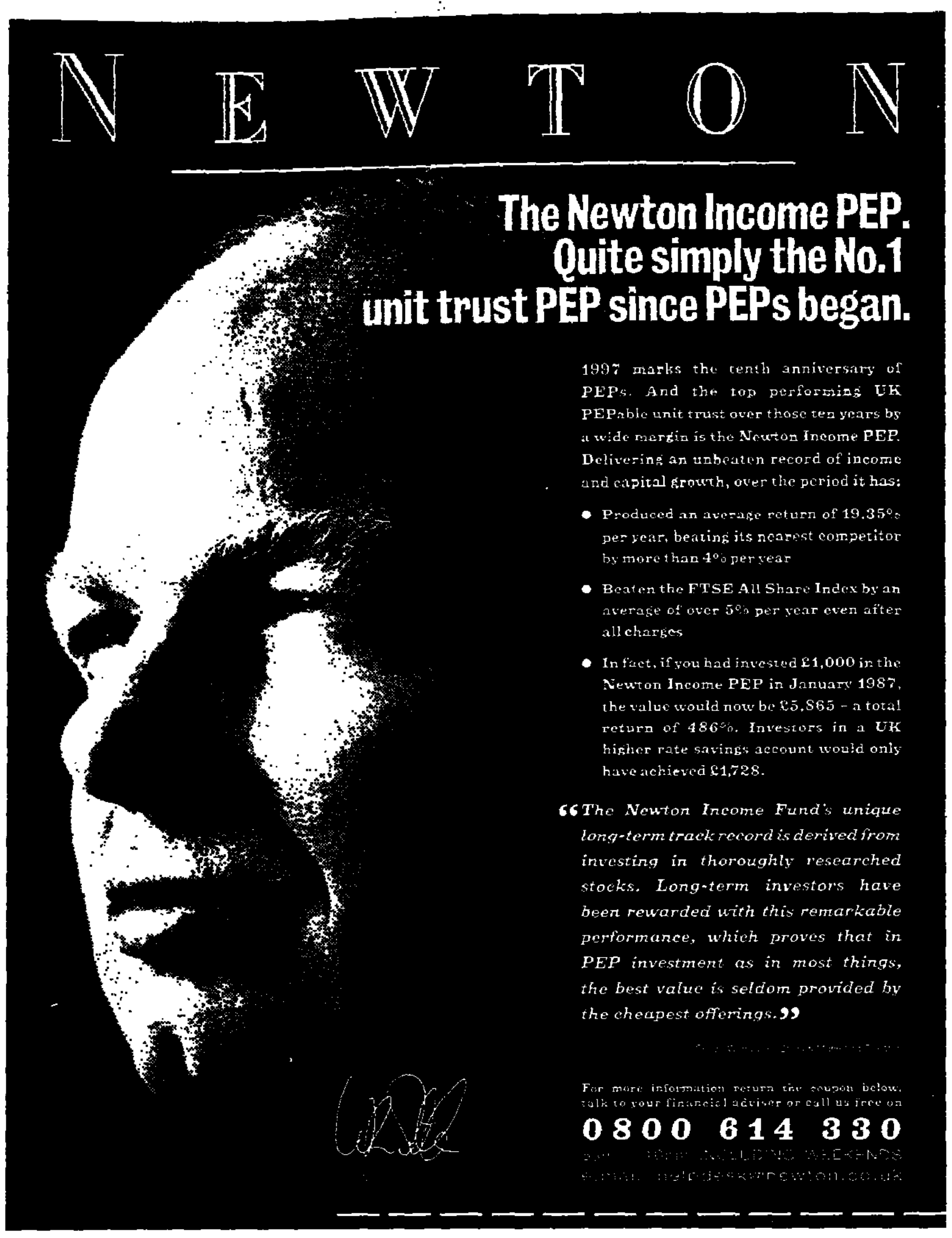
Yours faithfully,
ADRIAN SIMMONDS,
20 Queen Anne's Place,
Bush Hill Park,
Enfield, Middlesex.

CGT ALLOWANCES — DECEMBER 1996

The indexed rise for calculating the indexation allowance on assets disposed of in December 1996

Month purchased	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
January	-	0.869	0.778	0.693	0.604	0.544	0.495	0.391
February	-	0.861	0.771	0.679	0.598	0.538	0.489	0.381
March	0.944	0.858	0.765	0.664	0.596	0.535	0.483	0.375
April	0.905	0.832	0.742	0.629	0.581	0.517	0.459	0.351
May	0.892	0.824	0.735	0.622	0.578	0.515	0.454	0.343
June	0.886	0.820	0.731	0.618	0.579	0.515	0.448	0.338
July	0.886	0.810	0.733	0.621	0.583	0.517	0.447	0.337
August	0.885	0.802	0.717	0.617	0.578	0.512	0.431	0.333
September	0.886	0.794	0.713	0.618	0.571	0.508	0.424	0.324
October	0.877	0.788	0.703	0.615	0.568	0.500	0.410	0.314
November	0.868	0.782	0.698	0.610	0.555	0.493	0.404	0.303
December	0.871	0.777	0.699	0.608	0.550	0.495	0.400	0.300
	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
January	0.292	0.186	0.139	0.120	0.093	0.058	0.028	
February	0.285	0.180	0.133	0.112	0.087	0.051	0.023	
March	0.272	0.175	0.129	0.108	0.084	0.047	0.019	
April	0.234	0.160	0.112	0.098	0.071	0.036	0.012	
May	0.223	0.157	0.108	0.094	0.067	0.032	0.010	
June	0.219	0.151	0.108	0.095	0.067	0.031	0.009	
July	0.218	0.154	0.112	0.097	0.072	0.036	0.013	
August	0.205	0.151	0.112	0.098	0.067	0.030	0.008	
September	0.194	0.147	0.108	0.088	0.065	0.025	0.004	
October	0.185	0.143	0.104	0.089	0.063	0.031	0.004	
November	0.188	0.139	0.105	0.090	0.063	0.031	0.003	
December	0.189	0.138	0.109	0.088	0.056	0.025	-	

The RI month for disposals by individuals on or after April 6, 1985 (April 1, 1985 for companies) is the month in which the allowable expenditure was incurred, or March 1982 where the expenditure was incurred before that month.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* Based on a healthy male, non-smoker, aged 30 next birthday. The cost of cover will depend on age, sex and smoking status.

# Source: Micropal. Based on a UK savings account for investments of £2,500 and over 10 years to 2.9.96.

Full written details are available on request. Any financial advice given will relate only to the products of GA Life.

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GROSS

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£100,000+	7.05	5.64	6.80	5.44
£50,000+	6.75	5.40	6.50	5.20
£25,000+	6.70	5.36	6.45	5.16
£10,000+	6.50	5.20	6.25	5.00

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CR91

Rates are correct at 20.1.97 but may vary. The circumstances in which the rates may vary are described in our Select Accounts Terms and Conditions and Charges leaflet. It is important to note that whilst investors opening a Select 60 Account will be investing members of the Society, they will not thereby become entitled to vote on and to receive benefits in connection with the Society's proposed conversion to a public limited company listed on the London Stock Exchange, unless they satisfy the relevant conditions. *Interest will be paid after deduction of income tax at the lower rate (currently 20%) or, subject to the required certification, gross. Where the tax deducted exceeds an investor's tax liability (if any), a claim may be made to the Inland Revenue for repayment of tax. For individuals whose income falls within the lower rate band, the tax deducted will match their liability to tax on the interest and they will have no more tax to pay on it. Individuals who are liable at the higher rate of income tax of 40% will have to pay additional tax on the interest to cover the difference between the tax deducted and the higher rate tax due. Account balances below £10,000 will receive interest at the prevailing basic savings rate. Interest is not paid on balances below £50, unless the account holder is registered as being under 22 years of age. The account is for personal use only and is open to permanent UK residents. Full written terms and conditions will be sent with your application form. Following receipt of your completed application form, your confirmation slip will usually be sent to you within five full working days. Select 60 is a Share Account. Opening an account is subject to status and identification will be required. Minimum investment £10,000. Maximum holding with the Society £500,000.

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THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

For ARI see Cavell (John)

AXA EQUITY & LAW UNIT TST MGRS
01203 553 231

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
General Acc	711.30	756.80	+ 4.20	2.32
General Inc	593.70	631.70	+ 3.50	2.32
UK Growth Acc	493.20	524.60	+ 2.60	2.46
UK Growth Inc	319.20	333.60	+ 1.70	2.46
Higher Inc Acc	879.40	935.80	+ 2.30	3.86
Higher Inc Inc	468.40	498.40	+ 1.20	3.86
Gilt/Fixed Int Acc	215.80	227.80	- 0.20	5.37
Gilt/Fixed Int Inc	94.47	99.79	- 0.08	5.37
NB America	381.20	405.60	- 4.00	
Europe	390.10	415.00	- 9.30	0.14
Eng Growth	98.51	104.80	+ 1.40	2.56
Bal Fnd/rall Acc	124.20	132.20	+ 0.50	4.39
Bal Fnd/rall Inc	83.13	98.44	+ 0.34	4.38
Global Opps	104.90	111.60	+ 1.80	
Balanced Acc	68.77	79.10	+ 0.37	2.41
Balanced Inc	61.78	65.73	+ 0.34	2.41
Japan Acc	37.58	31.95	+ 0.84	
Pacific Basin Acc	416.10	442.70	+ 3.40	0.81

ABBEY UNIT TST MGRS
0345 717 373

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Gilts & Fixed Int	133.10	141.20t	- 0.40	6.74
High Inc Equity	193.80	207.10t	- 0.50	4.59
Worldwide Bond	274.30	290.80	+ 3.30	4.60
American Growth	429.10	456.70t	+ 9.80	0.36
Asian Pacific	338.50	362.00	+ 4.90	0.38
Assets & Earnings	321.30	343.60	+ 2.90	2.75
Euro Capital Acc	202.80	216.90	+ 4.70	0.73
Extra Inc	43.08	45.63t	+ 0.05	7.09
General	292.60	311.30	- 1.60	2.80
Global Opps	73.27	78.37	+ 1.04	0.51
Japan	90.22	96.49	+ 2.02	
Managed Inc	49.25	52.40t	+ 0.15	4.39
Mastertrust	174.30	186.40	+ 1.10	1.29
US Emerging Cos	211.00	224.50	- 2.50	
Ethical	87.29	92.86	+ 0.62	1.85
International	139.90	148.80	+ 2.50	0.67
Dividend & Growth	71.58	76.15t	+ 0.09	4.41
Global Grwth & Sec	74.55	79.68	- 0.28	2.33
Latin America	75.08	79.87	+ 1.15	0.39
Capital Reserve	147.40	147.40	- 0.10	4.75

ABERFORTH UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD
0131 220 0733

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
UK Small Cos	2498.00	2596.00	-12.00	

ABTRUST UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD
0800 833 580

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Amer Inc & Growth	65.78	68.35	+ 1.04	0.12
Emerging Mkts	79.35	82.66	+ 2.04	0.04
European	165.50	172.10	+ 4.40	
Extra Income #	51.10	53.79t	+ 0.90	5.05
Far East Emg Eco	132.30	138.80	- 1.90	0.45
Fixed Interest #	26.46	27.52	+ 0.13	9.01
Fund Inv Tst #	161.10	169.10t	+ 1.40	3.08
Japan	155.00	161.20	+ 5.70	
Latin American	65.39	68.05	+ 0.80	0.71
Pacific	82.92	87.06	- 0.87	0.30
Property Share	79.48	83.45t	- 0.85	2.11
UK Emerging Cos	74.99	81.06t	+ 1.33	1.19
UK Growth	58.64	62.19	+ 1.10	1.89
Aber World Port #	85.82	87.69t	+ 0.53	2.84
Ethical	82.25	85.54t	+ 0.53	2.06
Aberdeen Gilt Inc #	50.65	50.70t	- 0.38	7.31

AIRWAYS UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD
0171 256 5868

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Pendl Property #	101.00	106.50		5.25

ALLCHURCHES INV MGMT SVS LTD
01452 305 958

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Amity Income	98.02	104.00	+ 1.31	2.17
Income Builder Inc	85.00	90.43t	+ 0.16	4.22

ALLIED DUNBAR UNIT TSTS PLC
IFA dlg: 01793 610 366 Client dlg: 01793 514 514
Balanced Trusts

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Growth & Income	302.60	323.60	- 0.50	2.87

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Pacific Portfolio	166.78	179.34	+ 1.81	1.01
UK Equity	103.54	110.56	+ 0.58	3.29
UK Equity & Bd	60.60	64.20	- 0.02	5.35
UK Smlr Cos	55.56	59.43	+ 0.45	1.25

CENT BD OF FIN OF CHURCH OF ENG
0171 588 1815

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Inv Fund	807.21	819.41	+ 2.65	4.17
Fxd Int Sec	158.23	158.87	- 0.43	9.00

COIF CHARITY FUNDS
0171 588 1815

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Investment Inc	793.50	805.90	- 1.18	4.27
Investment Acc	1370.6	1376.2	- 5.51	
Fixed Int Inc	127.63	128.15	- 0.53	9.05
Fixed Int Acc	237.73	238.69	- 1.73	

CITY FINANCIAL UT MGRS LTD
0171 407 5666

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Buckmaster Intl	88.37	93.24	+ 0.49	5.37
Buck Bio-Tech	46.17	50.07t	- 0.01	
Acorn Ethical Tst	194.54	204.29t	+ 2.23	0.42
City Fin Assets	82.03	86.14	+ 0.68	1.78
City Fin Intl	89.95	94.35	+ 0.41	0.13
Friars Hse Cap	321.01	341.50t	+ 1.63	2.32
Buckley Wrld Gwth	142.79	151.36	+ 3.49	
J Sel Inc/Gth Inc	58.79	61.73t	- 0.38	3.38
Shaw Utilities	65.28	66.69	+ 0.16	6.64

CITY OF LONDON UNIT TST MGRS LTD
0171 711 0771 Admin: 01277 227 300

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Emerging Markets	58.71	62.29	+ 1.18	

CLERICAL MEDICAL UT MGRS LTD
0345 772 233

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
American Gwth	87.58	93.17	+ 0.90	
Dragon Growth	75.50	80.74	+ 0.46	0.25
Equity High Inc	96.49	103.32	+ 0.50	3.81
-do- Accum	140.57	150.52	+ 0.72	3.91
Extra Income Inc	26.85	28.29t	- 0.18	7.11
Extra Income Acc	29.97	31.57	- 0.20	7.11
European Gwth	67.38	71.49	+ 1.05	0.53
Evergreen	32.65	34.91	+ 0.41	
General Equity	113.33	120.24	+ 0.23	2.65
Japan Growth	38.56	41.02	+ 0.52	
Pedigree Gwth	68.52	73.29	+ 0.37	2.13
Pad Sm Coc Inc	40.35	43.39	+ 0.51	1.05
-do- Accum	43.01	46.25	+ 0.53	1.05
Retirement Inc #	29.17	31.50	+ 0.08	5.68
Special Sits	50.04	53.81	+ 0.51	2.24
UK & Overseas	62.85	66.68	+ 0.76	0.48

COLONIAL UNIT TRUSTS (UK) LTD
01634 898 000

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Balanced	74.27	77.36	- 0.12	3.90
Capital	88.45	92.73	+ 0.22	2.49
High Income	53.02	55.22	- 0.40	6.54
Top 50	60.02	62.58	+ 0.11	2.44

COMMERCIAL UNION TRUST MGRS LTD
0131 686 9818
PRESTIGE PORTFOLIO (PPT FUNDS)
Income Funds

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Equity Inc	205.71	214.30	+ 1.22	4.29
Long Gilt	44.09	45.91t	- 0.37	6.11
Monthly Inc Plus	51.36	53.40	- 0.42	8.39
Preference Shars	48.90	50.94t	- 0.11	7.65
Balanced Funds				
High Yield	148.58	154.79t	+ 0.86	5.51
Managed Fund	79.63	82.96	+ 0.78	2.67
UK Growth Funds				
Smaller Cos	56.68	59.05	+ 0.15	1.61
-do- Accum	68.90	69.79	+ 0.17	1.61
UK & General	105.44	109.84	+ 0.98	2.75
-do- Accum	138.74	144.54	+ 1.31	2.75
UK Growth	212.82	221.72	+ 2.94	1.27
International Growth Funds				
Europe Growth	228.34	237.88	+ 5.18	0.61
Far Eastern Gth	132.57	138.11	+ 0.90	0.02
Global Bond	77.23	80.46	+ 0.83	6.16
Japan Growth	91.65	95.49	+ 1.18	
North Amer Gth	266.52	277.65	+ 7.01	
Oriental Growth	88.85	92.56	+ 0.44	0.25
Worldwide Growth	74.88	78.01	- 1.24	
OTHER CU TRUSTS (NON PPT FUNDS)				
Deposit Fund	92.72	92.72	+ 0.08	5.19

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Hy S Europe	107.50	112.90	+ 2.30	2.06
Stees Sadh	201.10	214.50	+ 1.30	0.55
New Japan	80.50	84.92	+ 1.56	

JUPITER UT MGRS LTD
0171 581 3020

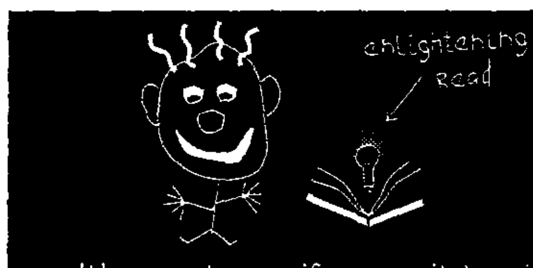
	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
World Health	228.40	242.90t	+ 3.59	
Income #	235.72	248.63t	+ 0.54	4.33
UK Growth	91.79	97.01t	+ 0.07	1.80
Intl Growth	89.83	95.56t	+ 1.34	0.45
Ecology	111.63	118.75	+ 2.03	0.87
European	227.537	242.06t	+ 2.32	0.56
Far Eastern	312.00	331.90t	+ 7.30	
UK Special Sits	58.58	62.48	+ 0.06	
Fd of Inv Tsts	54.68	58.32	+ 0.54	

MGM UNIT MANAGERS LTD
Dealing: 01277 291 010 Enq: 01903 204 631

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
European Growth	108.70	115.83	+ 3.01	0.58
Intl Bond	64.35	67.59	+ 0.86	4.77
Intl Equity Growth	87.59	93.17	+ 1.42	0.60
N Amer Growth	152.08	161.64	+ 3.54	0.77
Special Sits Growth	29.92	31.82	+ 0.01	1.96
UK Growth	492.61	524.05	- 0.91	2.46
-do- Accum	680.25	723.66	- 1.25	2.46

MW JOINT INVESTORS LTD
01620 825867

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Balanced Fd #	1486.50	1510.70	+14.50	2.80
Income #	1080.70	1076.70t	- 2.30	4.00



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KLEINWORT BENSON UNIT TRUSTS
Dealers: 0171 956 7354

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Bond Income	102.20	105.70t	- 0.90	6.89
Euro Pfd Inc	110.70	117.80	+ 0.70	2.75
-do- Accum	110.70	117.80	+ 0.70	2.75
Gilt Fund	123.50	127.20t	+ 0.10	6.36
Global Income	243.60	259.10	- 2.60	3.42
High Yield	162.40	173.10t	+ 1.20	5.21
-do- Accum	562.40	598.30t	+ 4.20	5.21
Money Market	98.61	98.61t	+ 0.97	5.41
Smllr Cos	56.75	71.02t	+ 1.04	3.19
American Gth	167.20	177.70t	+ 2.00	
Asia Growth	343.30	362.00	+ 3.70	

MALDON UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD
0131 222 4242

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Maldon General	178.20	179.50t	+ 4.20	3.45

MARKS & SPENCER UNIT TRUST LTD
0800 363432

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
M & S Inv Pfolio	186.60	192.40t	+ 1.20	2.39
-do- Accum	223.60	230.60t	+ 1.50	2.35
UK Sel Pfolio	167.10	172.20t	+ 0.30	2.41
-do- Accum	202.40	209.70t	+ 0.40	2.41
UK 100 Cos	125.70	125.70	+ 0.70	2.63
-do- Accum	129.10	129.10	+ 0.80	2.63

MARLBOROUGH FUND MGRS LTD
01204 364 842

	Sell	Buy	Wkly +/-	Yld %
Managed Tst	74.19	78.92	+ 1.04	3.40

Firm end to the week

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and *price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.*

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

1996/97 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
555	407½	Allied Domecq	429½	+ 6	6.9	13.0
825	477	Bulmer (HP)†	605		2.8	18.0
131	63½	Burn Stewart	69	...	6.2	73.8
980	615	Glenmorangie A	960		1.5	26.1
496	411	Grand Met	464½	+ 7½	4.3	15.0
493	425	Guinness	439½	− ½	4.4	13.5
380	315	Highland Dist	350	+ 8½	2.8	17.3
603	255½	Matthew Clark	293½		10.5	13.6
141	91½	Merrydown W	107½		5.3	14.5
2912½	1375	SA Breweries†	1668¾	+ 8¾	2.0	..

BANKS

1996/97 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
4087½	2749¼	ABN-AMRO	4087½	+ 31¼	3.0	15.9
811	528	Abbey Nat	784½	+ 15½	3.7	14.5
429½	315	Allied Irish	429½	+ 8	4.2	12.3
389¼	286	Aus New Z	382¾		5.0	
6912½	3843¾	Bank America	6912½	+ 227¼		
341½	227½	Bank Scotland	323½	+ 9	2.8	11.9
1164½	683	Barclays	1164½	+ 22	3.0	12.7
590	413	Bk of Ireland	590	+ 20	3.6	13.4
7121¼	4031¼	Citicorp	7121¼	+ 221¼		
1575	1278¾	Commerzbk	1318¾	+ 12¼	3.5	
1350	612½	Dai Ichi Kan Y	688¾	+ 28¾	0.7	..
3412½	2709¾	Deutsche Bk	3118¾	− 12½	2.2	..
812½	593¾	Espirito Santo	812½	+ 6¼	4.2	11.9
1507	607	Fuji Bank Y	658	+ 41	0.7	..
1495	931	HSBC	1493½	+ 38½	3.2	14.1
1455	930	HSBC Hk	1454½	+ 37½	3.2	13.8
532½	385	Irish Perm	532½	+ 10	2.7	14.8
487½	294½	Lloyds TSB	480½	+ 5½	3.1	17.3
754	566	Nat Aust Bk	754	+ 6¼	5.4	10.2
794½	605½	Nat West	771½	+ 8	4.3	11.0
602	464	Ryl Bk Scott	574	+ ½	4.1	12.7
771½	547	Stand Chart	771	+ 27	1.8	15.0
£174¼	£131¾	Wells Fargo	£164¾		2.0	
362	264	Westpac	356¾	+ 3¼	3.7	11.6

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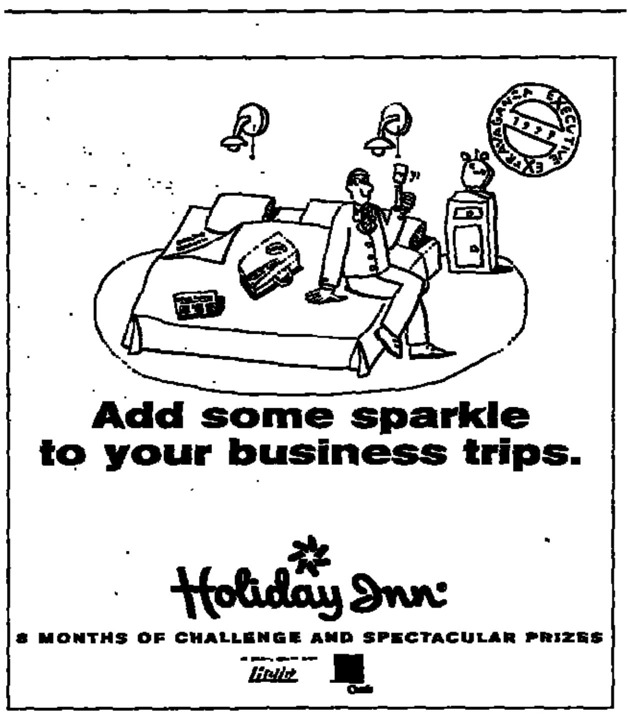
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WATER

ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET

BRITISH FUNDS

SHORTS (under 5 years)

1996/97 High	Low	Stock	Price £	+/-	Int yld %	Gross red yld
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 7% 1997	[illegible]	..	6.97	6.17
[illegible]	[illegible]	Exch 10½% 1997	[illegible]	..	10.48	6.15
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 8¾% 1997	[illegible]	[illegible]	8.63	6.21
[illegible]	[illegible]	Exch 15% 1997	[illegible]	[illegible]	14.13	6.23
[illegible]	[illegible]	Exch 9¾% 1998	[illegible]	[illegible]	9.45	6.37
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 7¼% 1998	[illegible]		7.18	6.41
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 14% 1998-01	[illegible]	[illegible]	12.83	6.51
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 15½% 1998	[illegible]	[illegible]	13.63	6.62
[illegible]	108	Exch 12% 1998	[illegible]		11.02	6.62
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 9½% 1999	[illegible]	[illegible]	9.04	6.72
[illegible]	[illegible]	Exch 12¼% 1999	[illegible]	[illegible]	11.05	6.74
[illegible]	107	Treas 10½% 1999	[illegible]	.	9.74	6.67
[illegible]	96	Treas 6% 1999	[illegible]	[illegible]	6.10	6.70
[illegible]	[illegible]	Conv 10¼% 1999	[illegible]	[illegible]	9.45	6.84
[illegible]	[illegible]	Conv 9% 2000	[illegible]	[illegible]	8.51	6.89
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 8% 2000	[illegible]	[illegible]	7.73	6.95
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 13% 2000	[illegible]	[illegible]	11.00	6.95
114	[illegible]	Treas 10% 2001	[illegible]	[illegible]	9.07	7.04
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 7% 2001	[illegible]	[illegible]	7.02	7.06

MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)

1996/97 High	Low	Stock	Price £	+/-	Int yld %	Gross red yld
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 9¾% 2002	[illegible]	[illegible]	8.74	7.19
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 8% 2003	[illegible]	[illegible]	7.69	7.19
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 10% 2003	[illegible]	[illegible]	8.76	7.26
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 11½% 2001-04	[illegible]	[illegible]	9.95	7.08
[illegible]	[illegible]	Fund 3½% 1999-04	[illegible]	[illegible]	4.15	6.07
[illegible]	[illegible]	Conv 9½% 2004	[illegible]	[illegible]	8.43	7.37
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 6¾% 2004	[illegible]	[illegible]	6.97	7.26
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 8½% 2005	[illegible]	[illegible]	7.93	7.37
[illegible]	[illegible]	Conv 9½% 2005	[illegible]	[illegible]	8.42	7.37
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 12½% 2003-05	[illegible]	[illegible]	9.80	7.28
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 7¾% 2006	[illegible]	[illegible]	7.45	7.40
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 7¾% 2006	[illegible]	[illegible]	7.58	7.42
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 8% 2002-06	[illegible]	[illegible]	7.82	7.33

1996/97 High	Low	Stock	Price £	+/-	Int yld %	Gross red yld
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 11¾% 2003-07	[illegible]	[illegible]	9.68	7.25
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 8½% 2007	[illegible]	[illegible]	7.90	7.44
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 9% 2008	[illegible]	[illegible]	8.06	7.49
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 8% 2009	[illegible]	[illegible]	7.73	7.54

LONGS (over 15 years)

1996/97 High	Low	Stock	Price £	+/-	Int yld %	Gross red yld
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 6¼% 2010	[illegible]	[illegible]	7.05	7.60
[illegible]	[illegible]	Conv 9% 2011	[illegible]	+ 1	8.02	7.59
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 9% 2012	[illegible]	[illegible]	7.99	7.60
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 5½% 2008-12	[illegible]		6.65	7.35
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 8% 2013	[illegible]	+ 1	7.73	7.62
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 7¾% 2012-15	[illegible]	[illegible]	7.67	7.62
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 8% 2015	[illegible]	[illegible]	7.70	7.60
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 8¾% 2017	[illegible]	[illegible]	7.87	7.65
[illegible]	[illegible]	Tr 8% 2021	[illegible]	[illegible]	7.67	7.60

UNDATED

1996/97 High	Low	Stock	Price £	+/-	Int yld %	Gross red yld
[illegible]	[illegible]	War Ln 3½%	[illegible]	[illegible]	7.71	
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas 2½%	[illegible]		7.84	
[illegible]	[illegible]	Consols 4%	[illegible]	[illegible]	7.89	

INDEX-LINKED on projected inflation of:

1996/97 High	Low	Stock	Price £	+/-	10%	5%
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas IL 4⅝% 1998	[illegible]	[illegible]		2.00
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas IL 2½% 2001	[illegible]	[illegible]	2.60	3.20
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas IL 2½% 2003	[illegible]	[illegible]	2.84	3.27
119	[illegible]	Treas IL 4⅝% 2004	[illegible]	[illegible]	2.91	3.30
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas IL 2% 2006	[illegible]	[illegible]	3.09	3.39
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas IL 2½% 2009	[illegible]	[illegible]	3.21	3.45
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas IL 2½% 2011	[illegible]	[illegible]	3.30	3.52
148	[illegible]	Treas IL 2½% 2013	[illegible]	[illegible]	3.36	3.56
[illegible]	[illegible]	Treas IL 2½% 2016	[illegible]	[illegible]	3.41	[illegible]

Source: FT Information

Price at suspension; † Ex dividend; ‡ Ex scrip; ▲ Ex rights issue; ▼ Ex all; § Ex capital distribution; * Figures or report awaited. No significant data. Companies in bold are constituents of the FTSE 100 index

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هكذا من الاصل

Complex saga of latest quick exit of Kanchelskis

ROB HUGHES

Weekend View

THE manner in which Andrei Kanchelskis slipped, silent in the night, from English to Italian football on Wednesday somehow catches the whole transience of our footballing times. He is a player of whimsical talent, untouchable when he is really flying, accused of malingering when the contest does not suit him, and gone before you can say "come back, Andrei" when the next move beckons. Kanchelskis never needed Bosman or the Treaty of Rome to be his own removal man.

Perhaps we should remember with some joy his English period: better to have seen such breathtaking skills than not at all. Manchester United, daring, to say the least, back in 1991, had paid an initial £650,000 to export him out of the Ukrainian mining belt where Kanchelskis earned 1,000 roubles per month — approximately £10.

They sold him for £5.5 million to Everton 17 months ago and, just as United have never effectively replaced his penetrating skills down their right flank, neither will Everton, though his stay on Merseyside was short and even more unpredictable.

Yet one can quite see why Fiorentina had to have him. The Italian club lies in midtable; Kanchelskis, when he is switched on, can mean the difference between anonymity and a European adventure, and that can recompense Vittorio Cecchi Gori, the Fiorentina president, for his £8 million outlay. Cecchi Gori simply had to buy; he had bid £6 million, the Serie A transfer deadline was upon him, and Everton was persuadable when the offer reached £8 million.

The scene outside the gates of a Birkenhead Christmas hamper factory where the deal was struck could not be improved by fiction. Cecchi Gori had sent his private jet to Liverpool, his emissaries on board, including Dennis Roach and Vicenzo Morabito, an English and an Italian agent, with instructions to bring Kanchelskis back.

Peter Johnson, the Everton chairman, expected them by 3pm and planned a flight of his own, to watch Everton at Newcastle. He never took off, the Italian plane touched down at 4.15pm, the wrangling went on until 11.15pm.

Outside, Giancarlo Gallavoti, a persistent and patient Italian journalist from *Gazzetta dello Sport*, had sat outside in his car for the whole duration. His reward? He saw Kanchelskis speed away in his black Porsche, together with George Scanlan, the former Dean of Humanities at Liverpool Polytechnic, who had been the interpreter to the Kanchelskis family.

The jet was given clearance to leave Liverpool at 2am and arrived back in Florence at 6am. After a couple of hours sleep, the new god for Fiorentina, a player who should be in his prime at 28, was presented to 1,000 supporters and to the press. They wanted to know why the player wore a black and white tie: the colours of Juventus, Fiorentina's despised enemy.

Later, Kanchelskis modelled his new shirt, No 32, which just about equals, in billion lire, the transfer fee and the wages that make Kanchelskis far and away the most expensive *straniero* to land in Italy from England.

There will be regret that he has left. Kanchelskis, with his wife, Inna, and infant son, Andrei jr, could be captivating company. We saw the human side of the man who regularly brought over his mother-in-law from the Ukraine, whose own mother works still in a car radio factory, and who had grown up under the old Soviet empire.

He became released as a youth during perestroika and, with considerable help from new friends such as Rune Hauge, the infamous agent from Norway, he found his way to Old Trafford. We saw what a thoroughbred sprinter he is, what an imaginative scorer of fine goals. We realised that, together with exceptional movement and balance, he had bravery, too — it was encapsulated in the performance of April 13, 1994, when Kanchelskis was an uncontrolled spirit inspiring United to a 4-1 FA Cup semi-final replay victory over Oldham Athletic at Maine Road.

Joe Royle, the Oldham manager that night, was to come into money at Everton, and to persuade Peter Johnson to buy the winger who destroyed his former team. Once again, agents and middle men, stretching all the way back to Shakhtyor Donetsk, his first club, who demanded a third of the transfer prize, manipulated and surrounded him.

He had grown tired of United, disenchanted, the way Alex Ferguson made him play through a stomach injury. Curiously, his grumbling complaint in the last months at Goodison — months in which Fiorentina agents were in evidence — concerned an ankle injury that baffled Everton. The whippet from the Ukraine has left his second English club in the lurch. The change from roubles to pounds to lire is his legacy.

Kanchelskis: on the move again and leaving England

From rock bottom to fever pitch

THE FACE OF FOOTBALL

By Andrew Longmore

Watkins is no Jack Walker. He just wants to show he cares. Photograph: Peter Trievnor

Paul Ashworth is an English teacher and is bonkers about Arsenal and Ms Hughes, the history teacher, in that order. Trevor Watkins is a City solicitor and is bonkers about his fiancée, his job, his cats and AFC Bournemouth in roughly that order. One is tall, dark, thirty-something and fictional; the other is small, receding, 31 and real.

In the week which saw the first preview of *Fever Pitch* the film (due for release on April 4), it is appropriate that a true drama of footballing devotion was being played out on the South Coast, featuring a hero of spectacular ordinariness who is still trying to work out how he got himself mixed up in all this.

Eight days ago, when the receivers were called in, it seemed that years of neglect had finally caught up with AFC Bournemouth. The club was £4 million in debt and the bank wanted its money back. But, the next day, the players turned out, and beat, Bristol City without being paid, heralding a week of remarkable emotion which could yet carry the club through to a promised land of financial stability.

Two thousand people packed the Winter Gardens on Tuesday and donated £31,000 to the Save the Cherries Trust Fund. In the wings, as the MC announced "the man who organised this meeting", Watkins was begging someone else to come onto the stage with him. No amount of legal training had prepared him for this moment. "I'm a supporter just like you," he began, "and I'm here to ensure we still have a football club to support." And they cheered him to the rafters.

Bournemouth will never win the league. Success is survival, in the League and at the bank. Unlike for Ashworth in *Fever Pitch*, there is no catharsis and no fulfilment, just an instinct that the club is worth preserving because, like the pier and sea, it has always been there.

"Bournemouth has been losing too many things in recent years," Watkins said. "One of its orchestras went, the cricket has gone and, if nobody had done anything, the football would have gone too. We had a three-day death sentence. It was that bad."

But somebody did do something. He offered help and was soon the focus for a full-scale rescue mission, a co-trustee of the fund, chairman of a revivalist meeting in the Winter Gardens and an unlikely symbol of hope.

"I did begin to wonder what I was letting myself in for. But I couldn't just say: 'Sorry, lads, got something on tomorrow.' I wanted to give it a go."

That morning, he had watched Mel Machin, the manager, reduced to tears by having to sack some of the catering staff. Then there were the players who barely knew what the receivers were, but instinctively understood they should play against Bristol, and his own distant memory of standing on the terraces with his father for the first time 25 years before. He still goes with his father, except these days they sit in the vice-presidents' seats in the stand.

His instinct proved correct. His old school, Bournemouth Grammar, raised £600, a listener to the local radio station donated a signed England shirt for auction, two Bristol City supporters drove down to Bournemouth with a cheque for £25, a lady handed in her invalidity benefit. Watkins was interviewed on television and the ball was rolling.

By Tuesday night, the Football League had agreed a stay of execution. Technically, Watkins and the town now have 13 days to raise £300,000 to ensure that Bournemouth can complete their fixtures to the end of the season. Unofficially, the more money raised, the stronger the message to the league HQ and to potential long-term investors.

"All we are doing here is buying time," Watkins said. "I'm not Jack Walker, I have no money to invest, but we can show the league that we care about our club, that we deserve to have a football team. It's not a campaign to take control, it's not about me or any individual. It's about the club and about thousands like me who love football and love our clubs."

It has been quite a week for Watkins, but today's home game against Blackpool is already a triumph. A capacity crowd of 12,000 is expected. "When I have children, I want to be able to take them to watch Bournemouth," Watkins said, "and, if it all works, I shall tell them there was a day when I thought they would never see this." Or, as Paul Ashworth would say to Ms. Hughes: "It's not just a damn game, it's football."

Frustrated Francis consoled by form of strike pair

By Russell Kempson

GERRY FRANCIS, the Tottenham Hotspur manager, glanced up at the two columns of players' names on his office noticeboard yesterday. Those available for the FA Carling Premiership game against Chelsea at White Hart Lane this afternoon numbered 16; those unavailable, because of injury or suspension, amounted to 13. Francis laughed.

"I have to, otherwise it would drive me mad," he said. "It's disappointing, it's frustrating and I'm fed up with it. I've got such a good team on paper; the trouble is, I can't play half of it."

With Teddy Sheringham and Chris Armstrong still sidelined, Francis will again field the youngest forward line in the Premiership — Steffen Iversen, 20, and Rory Allen, 19. "They've at least been able to show everyone what ability they've got," Francis said.

Ruud Gullit, the Chelsea player-manager, has yet to perm two from Mark Hughes, Gianluca Vialli and Gianfranco Zola — and may yet play all three strikers. "You have to do what is easiest for players to recognise, what gives them confidence," he said, somewhat cryptically.

Joe Royle, the Everton manager, will be given a substantial slice of the £8 million Fiorentina paid for Andrei Kanchelskis to spend on much-needed reinforcements. Darren Eadie, the Norwich City winger, heads Royle's list, though he admitted: "It is one thing having money to spend but quite another finding available players good enough to spend it on."

Bill Archer, the Brighton chairman, and Dick Knight, head of the consortium trying to take over the struggling Nationwide League third division club, held talks in London yesterday with the Centre of Dispute Resolution, an independent mediation service.

A statement issued afterwards said that Archer and Knight had "made further progress in working out a framework for a potential restructuring of the club". The parties will meet again within the next fortnight.

Kevin Horlock, the Swindon Town midfield player, yesterday completed his £1.5 million move to Manchester City. Jan Aage Fjortoft, the Middlesbrough striker, has joined Sheffield United for £700,000.

COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO THE WEEKEND FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 3.0 unless stated
** denotes all-ticket match*
Pools coupon numbers in brackets

FA Carling Premiership

(1) Aston Villa v Sunderland
(2) Blackburn v West Ham
(3) Derby v Liverpool
(4) Everton v Nottingham Forest
(5) Leeds v Arsenal
(6) Manchester Utd v Southampton
(7) Sheffield Wednesday v Coventry
(8) Tottenham v Chelsea
(9) Wimbledon v Middlesbrough

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Man Utd	24	13	8	3	48	27	47
Arsenal	24	13	7	4	44	23	46
Liverpool	24	13	7	4	41	20	46
Newcastle	24	12	6	6	46	27	42
Wimbledon	22	11	5	6	35	27	38
Chelsea	23	10	8	5	36	32	38
Aston Villa	24	10	6	8	31	25	36
Sheff Wed	23	8	10	5	26	27	34
Tottenham	23	9	4	10	26	31	31
Leeds	24	8	5	11	21	27	29
Sunderland	24	7	8	9	23	31	29
Everton	24	7	7	10	32	38	28
Leicester	23	7	6	10	22	31	27
Coventry	24	6	8	10	23	33	26
Derby	23	5	10	8	22	29	25
Blackburn	23	5	9	9	24	24	24
Nottm Forest	24	5	8	11	23	38	23
West Ham	23	5	7	11	19	30	22
Southampton	22	5	5	12	31	39	20
† Middlesbro	23	5	6	12	29	43	18

† Middlesbrough deducted three points

Nationwide League
First division

(10) Bolton v Birmingham
(11) Bradford v Huddersfield
(12) Grimsby v Charlton
(13) Norwich v Barnsley
(14) Port Vale v West Bromwich
(15) Portsmouth v Oldham
(16) QPR v Crystal Palace
(17) Southend v Ipswich
(18) Swindon v Sheffield Utd
(19) Tranmere v Reading
(20) Wolverhampton v Stoke

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bolton	30	17	10	3	63	33	61
Sheff Utd	29	14	8	7	49	31	50
Barnsley	28	14	8	6	49	34	50
Wolverhmptn	29	14	7	8	40	28	49
Norwich	29	13	6	10	40	41	45
Stoke	28	12	7	9	37	38	43
QPR	29	11	9	9	43	41	42
Tranmere	29	12	6	11	40	37	42
Port Vale	30	10	12	8	36	33	42
C Palace	28	10	10	8	52	32	40
Ipswich	29	10	10	9	41	39	40
Oxford Utd	29	11	7	11	40	34	40
Huddersfld	30	10	9	11	36	41	39
Portsmouth	30	11	6	13	34	37	39
Birmingham	26	9	10	7	29	25	37
Swindon	29	10	5	14	40	39	35
Charlton	28	10	5	13	30	38	35
West Brom	29	7	13	9	44	50	34
Reading	29	8	9	12	35	44	33
Bradford	30	7	9	14	25	45	30
Man City	28	8	5	15	29	42	29
Oldham	27	6	10	11	30	34	28
Southend	29	6	10	13	28	52	28
Grimsby	28	5	9	14	33	53	24

DR MARTENS LEAGUE: *Premier division:* Burton v Merthyr; Cambridge City v Atherstone; Cheltenham v King's Lynn; Crawley v Baldock; Gravesend and Northfleet v Halesowen; Gresley v Ashford; Hastings v Nuneaton; Newport AFC v Sittingbourne; Salisbury v Chelmsford; Sudbury Tn v Gloucester; Worcester City v Dorchester. **Midland division:** Bilston v Bedworth; Corby v Stourbridge; Dudley Town v Ilkeston; Grantham v Paget R; Moor Green v Rothwell; Redditch v Rounds T; Shepshed D v VS Rugby; Stafford v Hinckley Town; Sutton Coldfield Town v Solihull Boro. **Southern division:** Bashley v Buckingham Town; Cirencester Town v Tonbridge Angels; *Dartford v Cinderford*; Fleet T v St Leonards; Havant v Fisher London; Margate v Clevedon; Trowbridge v Newport (IOW); Weston-super-Mare v Waterlooville; Weymouth v Forest Green; Witney v Erith and Belvedere; Yate v Fareham.

Second division

(21) Bournemouth v Blackpool
(22) Bristol Rovers v Shrewsbury
(23) * Crewe v Burnley
(24) *Millwall v Bristol City*
(25) Notts County v Luton
(26) Peterborough v Walsall
(27) Plymouth v Wycombe
(28) Preston v Chesterfield
(29) Stockport v Brentford
(30) Watford v Rotherham
(31) Wrexham v Gillingham
(32) York v Bury

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Brentford	28	14	10	4	45	27	52
Luton	26	14	6	6	43	26	48
Crewe	27	15	1	11	40	30	46
Bristol City	28	12	8	8	45	30	44
Burnley	29	13	5	11	43	33	44
Stockport	26	12	8	6	37	28	44
Millwall	28	12	8	8	37	36	44
Bury	25	11	9	5	37	28	42
Chesterfield	26	12	6	8	24	20	42
Watford	26	9	14	3	26	20	41
Wrexham	25	10	10	5	34	30	40
Shrewsbury	29	9	9	11	39	45	36
Walsall	26	10	6	10	31	30	36
Blackpool	27	8	10	9	32	30	34
Bournemouth	29	9	7	13	26	34	34
Preston	28	9	6	13	29	34	33
Plymouth	28	7	10	11	31	42	31
Gillingham	28	8	7	13	30	38	31
Bristol Rov	28	7	10	11	27	31	31
York	27	8	6	13	28	42	30
Peterborough	27	6	11	10	39	45	29
Wycombe	27	7	5	15	26	41	26
Notts County	27	5	9	13	20	33	24
Rotherham	27	4	9	14	24	42	21

Third division

(33) Carlisle v Northampton
(34) Darlington v Lincoln
(35) Doncaster v Scunthorpe
(36) Hartlepool v Scarborough
(37) Hereford v Wigan
(38) Hull v Chester
(39) Leyton Orient v Exeter
(—) Mansfield v Brighton
(—) Rochdale v Barnet

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
* Fulham	29	18	5	6	52	24	59
Wigan	27	16	5	6	49	31	53
Carlisle	27	15	8	4	41	25	53
* Camb Utd	29	15	5	9	40	36	50
* Swansea	30	14	6	10	37	31	48
Northamptn	29	13	7	9	48	30	46
* Colchester	29	9	15	5	42	32	42
Lincoln	29	11	8	10	39	42	41
Scarborough	28	10	11	7	37	34	41
* Torquay	28	12	4	12	31	31	40
* Cardiff	28	12	4	12	31	34	40
Chester	27	10	9	8	29	30	39
Mansfield	28	9	11	8	30	27	38
Scunthorpe	27	11	4	12	42	42	37
Hull	29	8	13	8	27	32	37
Barnet	28	8	11	9	26	26	35
L Orient	29	9	8	12	26	28	35
Hartlepool	29	9	6	14	33	40	33
Rochdale	26	8	9	9	30	32	33
Exeter	29	8	6	15	28	42	30
Doncaster	29	8	4	17	32	47	28
Darlington	28	7	6	15	36	51	27
Hereford	29	7	5	17	28	44	26
† Brighton	29	5	6	18	28	50	19

† Brighton deducted two points
* not including last night's results

Vauxhall Conference

(—) Bath v Southport
(—) Bromsgrove v Halifax
(—) Dover v Kettering
(—) Hayes v Macclesfield
(—) Hednesford v Woking
(—) Northwich v Altrincham
(—) Rushden & D v Morecambe
(—) Slough v Gateshead
(—) Stalybridge v Farnborough
(—) Welling v Stevenage

COURAGE COMBINED COUNTIES LEAGUE: Premier division: Bedfont v Netherne; *Chipstead v Farnham*; Cove v Corinthian-Casuals; Feltham v Merstham; Godalming and Guildford v Walton Casuals; *Hartley Wintney v Cobham*; Reading Town v Raynes Park Vale; Sandhurst v Ashford; Viking Sports v Ash; Westfield v Charlwood.

Bell's Scottish League
Premier division

(40) Aberdeen v Kilmarnock
(41) Dundee Utd v Celtic
(42) *Dunfermline v Motherwell*
(43) Hibernian v Raith
(44) Rangers v Hearts

First division

(45) Clydebank v Airdrie
(46) *Falkirk v Dundee*
(47) Partick v East Fife
(48) St Johnstone v Greenock Morton
(49) *St Mirren v Stirling*

Second division

(—) *Ayr v Livingston*
(—) Berwick v Stranraer
(—) Clyde v Stenhousemuir
(—) *Hamilton v Dumbarton*
(—) Queen of South v Brechin

Third division

(—) Alloa v Forfar
(—) Arbroath v Queen's Park
(—) Cowdenbeath v East Stirling
(—) Montrose v Inverness CT
(—) Ross County v Albion

ICIS LEAGUE: Premier division: Aylesbury v Kingstonian; Bishop's Stortford v Dulwich; Boreham Wood v Bromley; Enfield v St Albans; *Harrow v Grays*; Heybridge v Hendon; Purfleet v Dagenham and Redbridge; Staines v Carshalton; Sutton United v Oxford City; Yeading v Chertsey; Yeovil v Hitchin. **First division:** Billericay v Barton Rovers; Bognor Regis v Marlow; Canvey Island v Croydon; Chesham v Hampton; Leyton Pennant v Aldershot Town; Molesey v Basingstoke; Thame v Berkhamsted; Tooting and Mitcham v Worthing; Uxbridge v Abingdon Town; Whyteleafe v Walton and Hersham; Wokingham v Maidenhead United. **Second division:** Chalfont St Peter v *Bracknell*; *Dorking v Metropolitan Police*; Edgware v Cheshunt; Egham v Hungerford; Leighton Town v Horsham; Tilbury v Wivenhoe; Ware v H Hempstead; Wembley v Windsor and Eton; Witham v Leatherhead. **Third division:** Braintree v Hornchurch; Camberley v Aveley; Clapton v Southall; *Flackwell Heath v East Thurrock*; Harlow v Lewes; Hertford v Wealdstone; Tring v Kingsbury.

SMIRNOFF IRISH LEAGUE: Premier division: Ards v Linfield; Cliftonville v Crusaders; Glenavon v Coleraine; Glentoran v *Portadown*. *First division:* Ballyclare v Distillery; Ballymena v Carrick; Larne v Bangor; Omagh v Newry.

FAI HARP LAGER NATIONAL LEAGUE: **Premier division:** Finn Harps v Bray (7.30); Shelbourne v Home Farm (7.0); Sligo v Bohemians (7.30).

UNIBOND LEAGUE: Premier division: Accrington Stanley v Marine; Bamber Bridge v Hyde; Bishop Auckland v Gainsborough; Boston v Barrow; Chorley v Emley; Colwyn Bay v Alfreton; Frickley v Witton; Guiseley v Blyth Spartans; Knowsley v Spennymoor; Lancaster v Leek; Runcorn v Buxton. **First division:** Atherton LR v *Ashton United*; *Curzon Ashton v Gretna*; Congleton v Farsley Celtic; Droylsden v Great Harwood; Lincoln United v Harrogate *Town*; *Matlock Town v Leigh*; *Radcliffe v* Bradford PA; Warrington v Netherfield; Whitley Bay v Stocksbridge PS; Workington v Eastwood Town; Worksop v Flixton.

FA CARLSBERG VASE: Fifth round: Banstead Ath v Herne Bay; Coll Row and Romford v Bedlington Terriers; Durham v Northwood; Guisborough Town v Wisbech; Mossley v Barking; North Ferriby v Whitstable Town; Taunton v Spalding; Whitby v Tiverton Tn.

GILBERT LEAGUE OF WALES: Bangor City v Aberystwyth; Barry v Rhyl (2.30); *Caersws v Cemaes; Carmarthen Town v* Caernarfon; Conwy v Llansantffraid (2.30); Flint Town v Ebbw Vale; Holywell v Ton Pentre; Inter Cable-Tel v Cemaes Bay; Porthmadog v Newtown.

ESSEX SENIOR LEAGUE: Premier division: Bowers v Ford United; East Ham v Hullbridge Sports; Saffron Walden v Great Wakering. League Cup: Fourth round: Danbury Trafford v Burnwell Hospital; Sandon Royals v Rayleigh.

LONDON SPARTAN LEAGUE: Premier division: Beaconsfield SYCOB v Haringey; *Hanwell v Amersham*; Harefield v Cockfosters; Islington St Marys v Hillingdon Boro; St Margaretsbury v Croydon Wel*tham Abbey v Woodford*.

MINERVA SOUTH MIDLANDS LEAGUE: Premier division: Brache Sparta v Hoddesdon; Buckingham Athletic v Welwyn Garden; Harpenden v London Colney; Langford v Biggleswade; Milton Keynes v Potters Bar; Royston v Arlesey; Toddington v Bedford.

SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE: Premier division: Backwell v Paulton R; Bideford v *Bridgwater*; *Calne v Elmore*; *Chard v* Mangotsfield; Chippenham v Torrington; Odd Down v Brislington; Westbury v Barnstaple.

JEWSON EASTERN COUNTIES LEAGUE: Premier division: Clacton v Sudbury; Fakenham v Stowmarket; Gorleston v Walton; Hadleigh U v Lowestoft; Halstead v Soham; Harwich and Parkeston v Woodbridge Town; March v Felixstowe P and T; Newmarket v Sudbury Res; Tiptree v Warboys.

HELLENIC LEAGUE: Premier division: *Didcot* v Banbury; Lambourn Sports v Swindon Supermarine; North Leigh v Burnham; Shortwood v Abingdon United; *Tuffley v Carterton*.

JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE: First division: Andover v Bemerton Heath; Downton v Romsey; East Cowes v Christchurch; Gosport v Cowes Sports; Petersfield v Wimborne Town; Portsmouth v BAT; Ryde Sports v Eastleigh; Thatcham Town v Lymington; Whitchurch v Bournemouth.

WINSTONLEAD KENT LEAGUE: First division: Beckenham v Faversham; Canterbury v Tunbridge Wells; Chatham v *Ramsgate*; *Cray v Woolwich*; *Crockenhill v* Sheppey; Deal v Furness; Greenwich v Corinthian; Lordswood v Folkestone Invicta; Thamesmead v Slade Green.

UHLSPORT UNITED COUNTIES LEAGUE: Premier division: Boston v Cogenhoe; Minitees Blackstone v Potton; Northampton Spencer v Desborough; St Neots v Newport Pagnell; Stamford v Holbeach; S and L Corby v Eynesbury; Stotfold v Bourne; Wootton v Ford Sports.

INTERLINK EXPRESS ALLIANCE: Barwell v Chasetown; Blakenhall v Hinckley Athletic; *Pershore T v Pelsall V*; *Rushall O v* Bridgnorth; Sandwell v Knypersley V; Stapenhill v Halesowen H.

ENDSLEIGH INSURANCE MIDLAND COMBINATION: Premier division: Alvechurch v King's Heath; Coleshill v Knowle; David Lloyd v Bilston Community College; Handrahan Timbers v Massey Ferguson; Highgate v Shirley; Richmond Swifts v Studley BKL; West Midland Fire Service v Coventry Sphinx; Worcestero v Southam. Challenge Cup: Fourth round: Wellesbourne v Mes KA. President's Cup: *Third round: Alveston v Polesworth North* Warwick; Continental Star v Colletts Green.

BANKS'S BREWERY LEAGUE: Premier *division: Bloxwich S v Stafford T; Cradley* Town v Ettingshall Ht; Darlaston v Ludlow T; Hill Top R v Wolverhampton United; Malvern T v Westfields; Stourport S v Walsall Wood; Tividale v Lye Town; Wolverhampton C v Gornal Res; Wednesfield v Bradley Hill T.

SOUTH EAST COUNTIES LEAGUE: First *division: Arsenal v Cambridge Utd* (11.0); Charlton v Chelsea (11.0); Gillingham v West Ham (10.45); Ipswich v Norwich *(11.0); Portsmouth v Queens Park Rangers* (11.0); Southend v Leyton Orient (11.0); Tottenham v Fulham (11.0); Watford v *Millwall (11.0)*. *Second division:* Barnet v Crystal Palace (11.0); Bournemouth v Wycombe (11.0); Brentford v Swindon (11.0); Brighton v Wimbledon (11.0); Bristol City v Oxford Utd (11.0); Bristol Rovers v Tottenham (11.0); Colchester Utd v Southampton (12.0); Reading v Luton (11.0)

PRESS & JOURNAL HIGHLAND LEAGUE: Buckie Thistle v Wick Academy; Clachnacuddin v Peterhead; Deveronvale v Elgin; Forres Mechanics v Nairn County; Fort William v Fraserburgh; Huntly v Cove; *Keith v Brora, Rothes v Lossiemouth*

NORTHERN COUNTIES EAST LEAGUE: Premier division: Armthorpe Welfare v Arnold; Ashfield v Denaby; Belper Town v Hallam; Brigg Town v Maltby MW; Hucknall Town v Pickering; Liversedge v Ossett Town; Ossett Albion v Glasshoughton Welfare; Selby v Pontefract Cols; Sheffield v Hatfield Main

NORTH WEST COUNTIES LEAGUE: First division: Burscough v Chadderton; Darwen v Atherton Collieries; Eastwood H v Bootle; *Holker Old Boys v Maine Road*; Nantwich Town v St Helens; Penrith v Kidsgrove; Prescot Cables v Newcastle Town; Rossendale v Glossop North End; Salford v Vauxhall GM; Trafford v Clitheroe.

FEDERATION BREWERY NORTHERN LEAGUE: First division: Chester-le-Street v South Shields; Consett v Dunston Federation; Murton v Morpeth; RTM Newcastle v Stockton; Seaham Red Star v Crook; Tow Law v Easington; West Auckland v Billingham.

UNIJET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE: First *division: Arundel v Southwick*; Eastbourne Town v Three Bridges; Horsham YMCA v Hailsham; Langney Sports v Hassocks; *Portfield v Wick*; Saltdean v Oakwood; Whitehawk v Mile Oak; John O'Hara League Cup: Third round: Ringmer v Pagham.

OLD BOYS' LEAGUE: Premier division: Glyn OB v Old Vaughanians; Latymer OB v Clapham OX; Old Meadonians v Old Hamptonians.

SOUTHERN OLYMPIAN LEAGUE: Senior one: Ulysses v Old Finchleians; Witan v *Parkfield*.

SOUTHERN AMATEUR LEAGUE: First division: Old Actonians v Old Esthameians; *Polytechnic v Crouch End Vamps*; *South* Bank v Old Parmiterians; West Wickham v Norsemen.

ARTHURIAN LEAGUE: *Arthur Dunn Cup:* Second round: Lancing v Malvernians. Premier division: Etonians v Wykehamists; Reptonians v Carthusians.

SCHOOLS MATCHES (kick-off 10.30 unless stated): Under-15 international: Ireland v Wales (in Dublin, 12.0). FA Premier League Trophy: *Under-19: West Yorkshire* v Northumberland (11.0). English Fuji Film Trophy: Fifth round: Coventry v South *Notts (11.0)*; *Liverpool v East Riding (11.0)*; Sefton v North Tyneside (11.0). Southern Counties Cup: Reading v Bexley (11.0). Pickford Shield: Isle of Wight v Southampton. English Goodyear Trophy (Under-16): Thomas Hepburn, Durham v City School, South Yorks (11.30). Barnet Shieldhouse Cup: Liverpool v Chester; Crosby v Bootle; Skelmersdale v St Helens; Preston v Bolton. Northern merit: Huddersfield v Bradford; Preston v Leeds. *Inter-association:* Hull v Spen Valley; Newham v Hackney. London Peer Trophy: Islington v Hillingdon; Redbridge v South London.

RUGBY UNION

Kick-off 2.30 unless stated

Five nations' championship

England v Scotland
(at Twickenham, 3.0)
Wales v Ireland
(at Cardiff Arms Park, 3.0)

Courage Clubs Championship
Third division

Exeter v Walsall (3.0)
Fylde v Clifton
Havant v Morley
Liverpool St Helens v Redruth
Otley v Lydney (2.15)
Reading v London Welsh (1.30)
Rosslyn Park v Leeds
Wharfedale v Harrogate

Fourth division north

Birmingham/Solihull v Nuneaton
Kendal v Stoke-on-Trent
Lichfield v Sheffield
Preston Grasshoppers v Aspatria (2.15)
Sandal v Hereford
Stourbridge v Winnington Park
Worcester v Manchester

Fourth division south

Barking v Askeans
Berry Hill v Plymouth
Charlton Park v Cheltenham
Metropolitan Police v Camberley (3.0)
Weston-super-Mare v
North Walsham (3.0)

SOUTH WEST: First division: Brixham v *Launceston*, Gloucester Old Boys v Camborne; Maidenhead v Bridgwater; St Ives v Stroud; Salisbury v Barnstaple; *Torquay v Matson*.

NORTH: First division: Hull Ionians v Widnes; Sedgley Park v Bradford and Bingley; *Stockton v New Brighton*; Tynedale v Bridlington; Wigton v Macclesfield; West Park Bramhope v Broughton Park.

CLUB MATCHES: Blackheath v Cambridge University (12.0); London Scottish v Watsonians (3.0); Sale v Waterloo (12.0); *Wakefield v Orrell (12.0)*; West Hartlepool v Rotherham (3.0)

RUGBY LEAGUE

Kick-off 2.30

NATIONAL CONFERENCE LEAGUE: Premier division: Dudley Hill v West Hull; Heworth v Mayfield; Leigh Miners v Saddleworth; Lock Lane v Egremont; Oldham St Annes v Wigan St Patricks; Woolston v Beverley. First division: Askam v Leigh East; Barrow Island v Eastmoor; *Blackbrook v Moldgreen*; *Oulton v Walney* Central; Thornhill v East Leeds; Wigan St Judes v Millom. Second division: Dewsbury Moor v *Ovenden*; *Featherstone Amateur v Eccles*; Hull Dockers v Shaw Cross; Milford v Skirlaugh; Normanton v New Earswick; York Acorn v *Redhill*.

HOCKEY

NASTRO AZZURRO LEAGUE: Premier League: Anchorians v Fareham; Chichester v Bournemouth; High Wycombe v Ashford; *Maidenhead v Ramgarhia*; Old Kingstonians v Gore Court; Old Whitgiftians v Beckenham; Spencer v Richmond; Wimbledon v Tunbridge Wells; Woking v Winchester; Wokingham v Hampstead/Westminster. Hampshire/Surrey: Portsmouth v Camberley; Basingstoke v London University; Oxted v Oxshott; Old Cranleighans v Old Mid-Whitgiftians; Dulwich v Epsom; Blandford v Andover; *Petersfield v Southampton*; Cheam v Purley; Old Walcountians v Barnes. Kent/Sussex: Ashford v Herne Bay; *Bexleyheath v Old Bordenians*; Bexley Invicta v Belvedere; Blackheath v Middleton; Bognor v Sevenoaks; Brighton v Marden Russets; Eastbourne v Mid Sussex; Lloyds Bank v Old Holcombeians; Tulse Hill v Old Williamsonians; Worthing v Horsham. Middx/Berks/Bucks and Oxon: Amersham v Richings Park; Bracknell v Old Merchant Taylors'; City of Oxford v PHC Chiswick; Eastcote v Lions; Gerrards Cross v Mill Hill; Harrow v Milton Keynes; Headington v Farnham Common; Newbury v Marlow; Staines v Sunbury; West Hampstead v Hayes.

NORTH LEAGUE: First division: Chester v Swalwell; Formby v Ben Rhydding; Norton v Harrogate; Sheffield Bankers v Neston; Southport v Ramgarhia; Timperley v Springfields.

DTZ DEBENHAM THORPE MIDLAND LEAGUE: Premier division: Harborne v Hampton-in-Arden; Loughborough Students v Khalsa; *North Notts v Bloxwich*; Nottingham v Coventry and North Warwickshire; Olton and West Warwickshire v Blossomfield.

ADNAMS EAST LEAGUE: Premier division A: Bishop's Stortford v Cambridge *Univ; Colchester v Cambridge City*; Ipswich v Dereham; Peterborough Town v Sudbury; Redbridge and Ilford v Chelmsford. Premier division B: Bedford Town v Westcliff; Bury St Edmunds v Huntingdon; Clacton v Romford; Ipswich and East Suffolk v Luton Town; Old Southendian v *Norwich City*.

SUN LIFE WEST LEAGUE: Premier division: Bath Buccaneers v Llan and Llan; Bristol Univ v Plymouth; Clevedon v Whitchurch; Robinsons v Taunton Vale; Weston-super-Mare v Swansea.

WOMEN'S TRIANGULAR TOURNAMENT: Loughborough Students v Leicester v English Universities (at Loughborough, 12.30).

WOMEN'S ENGLISH INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIPS: Under-19 and under-16 (at Crystal Palace, 8.50am).

WOMEN'S LEAGUES: South: Hampstead v Winchester; Horsham v Worthing; Reading v W Hill; Southampton v Dulwich; Tulse Hill v Portsmouth. West: Bournemouth v Colwell; St Austell v Leominster; Wimborne v Redland; Yate v Exeter. North: Blackburn *v Poynton*; *Sheffield v Welton*.

WOMEN'S CLUB MATCHES: Aldridge v Exmouth; Bracknell v Cardiff Athletic; *Chester v Colwyn Bay*; *Copdock v* Harleston; Hampton v Sherwood; Northampton v Pickwick; Sevenoaks v *Letchworth (1.30)*; *Woking v Ipswich*; West Witney v Bedford (12.0).

OTHER SPORT

ATHLETICS: Great Britain v Russia (in Glasgow)

BADMINTON: English championships (at Norwich Sports Village).

BASKETBALL: Budweiser League: Derby v Birmingham (7.30), Manchester v Leicester (7.30); Newcastle v Leopards (7.30); Thames Valley v Hemel and Watford (8.0). *National League: Men: First division:* Bury and Bolton v Solent (7.30); Nottingham v Liverpool (8.0); Plymouth v Brixton (7.30); Stockton v *Mid Sussex* (7.30); Ware v Coventry (8.0); Westminster v Oxford (8.0). Second division: Slough v Northampton (8.0); Solihull v Flintshire (8.0); South Wales v London (8.0); Swindon v Sheffield (8.0); Thames Valley v Bournemouth (3.30). Women: First division: Barking and Dagenham v Nottingham (8.0); Crystal Palace v Harlesden (8.0); Ipswich v Spelthorne (7.30); London v Northampton (8.0); Rhondda v Sheffield (6.30); Thames Valley v Birmingham (5.45). Second division: Chelmsford v Plymouth (7.0); Leicester v *Manchester* (5.0); *Solent v Liverpool* (6.30).

BOWLS: World indoor championships (in Preston).

ICE HOCKEY: Superleague: Nottingham v Basingstoke (7.0); Sheffield v Bracknell *(7.0)*; *Cardiff v Ayr (7.0)*.

LACROSSE: Shepherds Friendly Society League: Premier division: Timperley v *Heaton Mersey*; *Hulmeians v Poynton*; Cheadle Hulme v Cheadle. Daily Telegraph Lancashire Cup: Semi-finals: Heaton Mersey A v Boardman and Eccles A; *Old* Waconians B v Heaton Mersey Guild. Daily Telegraph Junior Flags: *Semi-finals: Rochdale v Stockport; Ashton v Cheadle A.*

ROWING: Hampton Schools Head of the River.

SNOOKER: Regal Welsh Open (in Newport).

VOLLEYBALL: *National League: Men:* First division: Malory Lewisham v Reebok Liverpool City; Polonia Ealing v *Leeds*; Sportset Whitefield v Crofton Sportsmen's house; Warwick Riga v City of Sheffield; Tooting Aquila v Wessex. Women: First division: Loughborough v Britannia Music City.

TOMORROW

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 3.0 unless stated

FA Carling Premiership

Newcastle v Leicester (4.0)

Nationwide League
First division

Oxford Utd v Manchester City (2.10)

GILBERT LEAGUE OF WALES: Connah's Quay v *Briton Ferry*

FAI HARP LAGER NATIONAL LEAGUE: Premier division: Cork v Dundalk (2.0). *UCD v Shamrock (3.15)*.

UK LIVING WOMEN'S FA CUP: Fifth round: Wembley v Preston Rangers; Southampton v Berkhamsted; Middlesbrough v Ilkeston; Millwall v Doncaster; Tottenham v Croydon; Reading v Aston *Villa*; *Arsenal v Huddersfield*.

FA WOMEN'S LEAGUE: Northern division: Blyth Spartans v Wolverhampton; *Bradford v Aston Villa*; Garswood St Helens v Stourport; Sheffield Wednesday v Huddersfield. **Southern division:** Berkhamsted v *Leyton Orient*; *Langford v* Ipswich; Oxford Res v Town and County; Whitehawk v Brighton and Hove; Wimble*don v Three Bridges*

BASKETBALL

BUDWEISER LEAGUE: Birmingham v Crystal Palace (7.0); Leopards v Chester (7.0); London v Worthing (5.0); Sheffield v Newcastle (7.0). **National League:** Men: First division: Plymouth v Westminster (4.0). **Second division:** Derby v Chessington (5.0); South Bank v Swindon (4.0); Thames Valley v South Wales (4.0). **Women: Second division:** Tyne and Wear v Doncaster (2.30)

HOCKEY

NATIONAL LEAGUE: Premier division: Barford Tigers v Guildford (at Holyhead Leisure Centre 1.0); Canterbury v Reading (at Polo Farm, 1.0); Havant v Cannock (at Havant College, 2.15); Hounslow v Old Loughtonians (at Dukes Meadows, Chiswick, 2.0); Southgate v East Grinstead (at Broomfield School, 2.0); Surbiton v Teddington (at Sugden Road, 2.0). First division: Beeston v Firebrands (at Highfields, Nottingham, 2.0); Blueharts v Edgbaston (at Hitchin Boys School, 2.0); Bournville v Doncaster (at King Edward's *Girls School*, 2.30); Bromley v Crostyn (at Priory Leisure Centre, Orpington, 1.0); Brooklands v City of Portsmouth (at *Georges Road, Sale*, 2.0); Indian Gymkhana v Gloucester City (at Thornbury Avenue, 2.30); Isca v Harleston Magpies (at Exeter School, 11.45); Lewes v Warrington (at Southdown Club, 1.30); Oxford Hawks v Trojans (at Banbury Road, 12.30); Oxford University v Stourport (at St Edward's School, 2.0); Sheffield v St Albans (at Abbeydale Park, 2.0)

SCOTTISH INDOOR CUP: Men: Semi-finals: Menzieshill v Torbrex W (12.0); Gordonians v MIM (1.0). Final: (4.0). **Women:** Semi-finals: Clydesdale v Grove (10.0); Edinburgh L v Western KP (11.0). Final: (3.0) (at Perth).

ENGLISH WOMEN'S INDOOR CHAMPIONSHIP: Under-19 (Crystal Palace, 8.50am)

WOMEN'S REPRESENTATIVE MATCHES: English Universities v Chelmsford (12.0); English Universities v Ipswich (1.30) (at Cambridge)

WOMEN'S COUNTY MATCH: Lancashire v Shropshire (Formby, 2.30).

RUGBY LEAGUE

Club matches

Bradford v Keighley (3.0)
Castleford v Featherstone (3.30)
Lancashire Lynx v Wigan (3.0)

RUGBY UNION

Courage Clubs Championship
Second division

Nottingham v Moseley (3.0)

Fourth division south

Henley v Tabard (2.30)
Newbury v High Wycombe (3.0)

OTHER SPORT

BADMINTON: English championships (at Norwich Sports Village).

BOWLS: World indoor championships (in Preston).

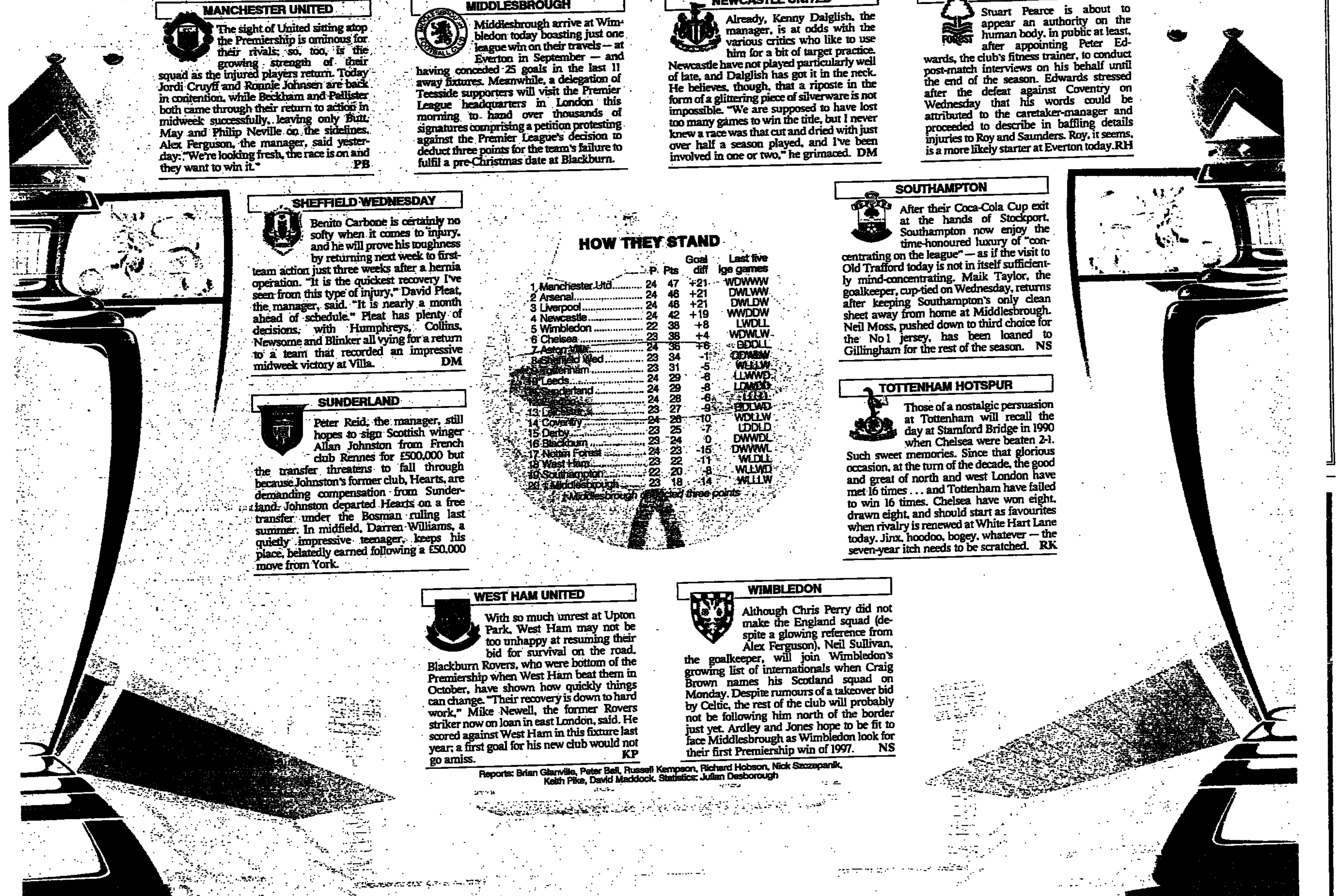
ICE HOCKEY: Superleague: Manchester v Cardiff (6.0); Bracknell v Ayr (6.0); Newcastle v Nottingham (6.30)

LACROSSE: Daily Telegraph Senior Flags: Semi-final: Mellor v Stockport (at Cheadle).

SNOOKER: Benson and Hedges Masters (at Wembley Conference Centre)

VOLLEYBALL: National League: Women: First division: KLEA Leeds v Sheffield Wednesday; Ashcombe Guildford v Reebok Liverpool City; London Malory v Essex Estonians; Smoke Free Birmingham v Manchester United Salford; Orpington v *Britannia Music City*

THE TIMES GUIDE TO THE PREMIERSHIP THIS WEEKEND



ARSENAL

A most encouraging feature of Arsenal's recent run is that they do not seem dependent on any single player, winning games now without Ian Wright, now without Dennis Bergkamp. But with Paul Merson in such devastating form, and back on the fringe of the England team, thrust in attack seems guaranteed. George Graham, the manager Arsenal sacked, is building a Leeds team no stranger to strongarm methods itself, but infinitely less effective than Arsenal's. Deane is the danger. **BG**

ASTON VILLA

Penalties have always been a delicate subject at Villa Park since Gareth Southgate's blunder during Euro 96. Dwight Yorke has recently squandered two spot kicks and Villa's youngsters apparently need a few lessons in the art, too. They bowed out of the Birmingham Senior Cup, against West Bromwich Albion, after a 4-3 penalty shoot-out. Rumours that Villa are considering a million-pound sponsorship deal from a Midlands pizza house are completely true. **RK**

BLACKBURN ROVERS

Only Blackburn could deny they had appointed a manager, then announce it *was* true a week later, without actually bringing along said manager. Now, Sven Goran Eriksson is supposed to be leaving even before he has *started*. It could only happen at Ewood Park, under the stewardship of Robert Coar, the chairman. On the pitch, Jason Wilcox is doubtful, but Billy McKinlay is free from suspension and his bullish qualities are required after a tame defeat at Tottenham. **DM**

CHELSEA

Will Tottenham man-mark Zola? Glenn Hoddle says you cannot do it at international level, but whenever Zola is close-marked, Chelsea stumble. Having rashly left Mark Hughes out of his starting line-up against Liverpool, only for Hughes to come on and save Chelsea's bacon, Ruud Gullit, the manager, must surely start him this time. And he can hardly drop Vialli after those two goals. Local derbies tend to stand form on its head, but Chelsea are unlikely to lose this one. **BG**

COVENTRY CITY

Gordon Strachan has found the transition from player to manager eye-opening, especially when negotiating transfers. "When I ask about a player, because I'm a new manager, the price becomes ridiculous," Strachan said, indignantly. "Some chairmen want to play games and try to take advantage, but I'm not having that." Strachan is learning quickly, judging by the arrival of Gary Breen from Birmingham City, and Aleksandr Evtushok, the Ukrainian, at Highfield Road this week. **RK**

DERBY COUNTY

At £100,000, Paul McGrath is arguably the best signing of the season. Indeed, Jim Smith, 26 years in league management, was moved to say that the defender, who was recalled to the Ireland squad this week, is among the best buys of his career. He will consider McGrath, who faces Liverpool this afternoon, even better value if he is forced to pay Aston Villa a further £100,000 at the end of the season. Under the terms of the transfer, the fee is doubled if Derby avoid relegation. **RH**

EVERTON

The drawbridge went up at Bellefield, Everton's training ground, yesterday, with the press firmly excluded as Everton try to avoid the worst run in the club's history of seven successive league defeats. Craig Short will miss the game against Nottingham Forest today after a head injury during the 4-1 defeat at Newcastle. In his absence, Everton are likely to change to a more attacking formation, with Barmby being recalled. Gerrard should keep his place. **PB**

LEEDS UNITED

Leeds have a five-game unbeaten run to defend, but Arsenal will provide the biggest test so far, particularly for a side with only 21 goals from 24 Premiership games. The omission of Ian Rush on Wednesday did not do anything to improve that ratio. "He could be back," George Graham, the manager, suggested, but these are trying times for Leeds strikers. "All the strikers are working hard, but there aren't many chances being created," Rush said pointedly. **PB**

LEICESTER CITY

Despite switching to a 4-4-2 formation, initially because of injuries, Leicester have lost none of the snap that prompted Kevin Keegan to describe them as the hardest-working side in the Premiership when Newcastle lost 2-0 at Filbert Street in October. Emile Heskey will be their main weapon at St James' Park tomorrow, having drifted to the left of midfield to leave Claridge and Marshall up front — the scruffiest forward partnership in English football, if not the most potent. **RH**

LIVERPOOL

Defensive disarray. It sums up Liverpool at present. Not only did they produce one of the truly awful defensive collapses at Chelsea, but defender Neil Ruddock managed to get himself injured last week, in rehabilitation from injury. He was left behind when the team travelled to Amsterdam for a six-a-side tournament, supposedly for rest and recuperation, but still managed to tweak a hamstring. Babb could be recalled, while there will be a choice up front between Berger and Collymore. **DM**

MANCHESTER UNITED

The sight of United sitting atop the Premiership is ominous for their rivals; so, too, is the growing strength of their squad as the injured players return. Today Jordi Cruyff and Ronnie Johnsen are back in contention, while Beckham and Pallister both came through their return to action in midweek successfully, leaving only Butt, May and Philip Neville on the sidelines. Alex Ferguson, the manager, said yesterday: "We're looking fresh, the race is on and they want to win it." **PB**

MIDDLESBROUGH

Middlesbrough arrive at Wimbledon today boasting just one league win on their travels — at Everton in September — and having conceded 25 goals in the last 11 away fixtures. Meanwhile, a delegation of Teesside supporters will visit the Premier League headquarters in London this morning to hand over thousands of signatures comprising a petition protesting against the Premier League's decision to deduct three points for the team's failure to fulfil a pre-Christmas date at Blackburn.

NEWCASTLE UNITED

Already, Kenny Dalglish, the manager, is at odds with the various critics who like to use him for a bit of target practice. Newcastle have not played particularly well of late, and Dalglish has got it in the neck. He believes, though, that a riposte in the form of a glittering piece of silverware is not impossible. "We are supposed to have lost too many games to win the title, but I never knew a race was that cut and dried with just over half a season played, and I've been involved in one or two," he grimaced. **DM**

NOTTINGHAM FOREST

Stuart Pearce is about to appear an authority on the human body, in public at least, after appointing Peter Edwards, the club's fitness trainer, to conduct post-match interviews on his behalf until the end of the season. Edwards stressed after the defeat against Coventry on Wednesday that his words could be attributed to the caretaker-manager and proceeded to describe in baffling details injuries to Roy and Saunders. Roy, it seems, is a more likely starter at Everton today. **RH**

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY

Benito Carbone is certainly no softy when it comes to injury, and he will prove his toughness by returning next week to first-team action just three weeks after a hernia operation. "It is the quickest recovery I've seen from this type of injury," David Pleat, the manager, said. "It is nearly a month ahead of schedule." Pleat has plenty of decisions, with Humphreys, Collins, Newsome and Blinker all vying for a return to a team that recorded an impressive midweek victory at Villa. **DM**

SUNDERLAND

Peter Reid, the manager, still hopes to sign Scottish winger Allan Johnston from French club Rennes for £500,000 but the transfer threatens to fall through because Johnston's former club, Hearts, are demanding compensation from Sunderland. Johnston departed Hearts on a free transfer under the Bosman ruling last summer. In midfield, Darren Williams, a quietly impressive teenager, keeps his place, belatedly earned following a £50,000 move from York.

HOW THEY STAND

	P	Pts	Goal diff	Last five lge games
1 Manchester Utd	24	47	+21	WDWWW
2 Arsenal	24	46	+21	DWLWW
3 Liverpool	24	46	+21	DWLDW
4 Newcastle	24	42	+19	WWDDW
5 Wimbledon	22	38	+8	LWDLL
6 Chelsea	23	38	+4	WDWLW
7 Aston Villa	24	36	+6	DDDLL
8 Sheffield Wed	23	34	-1	[illegible]
9 Tottenham	23	31	-5	WLLLW
10 Leeds	24	29	-6	LLWWD
11 Sunderland	24	29	-8	LDWDD
12 [illegible]	24	28	-6	[illegible]
13 Leicester	23	27	-9	DDLWD
14 Coventry	24	26	-10	WDLLW
15 Derby	23	25	-7	LDDLD
16 Blackburn	23	24	0	DWWDL
17 Nottm Forest	24	23	-15	DWWWL
18 West Ham	23	22	-11	WLDLL
19 Southampton	22	20	-8	WLLWD
20 ‡Middlesbrough	23	18	-14	WLLLW

‡Middlesbrough deducted three points

SOUTHAMPTON

After their Coca-Cola Cup exit at the hands of Stockport, Southampton now enjoy the time-honoured luxury of "concentrating on the league" — as if the visit to Old Trafford today is not in itself sufficiently mind-concentrating. Maik Taylor, the goalkeeper, cup-tied on Wednesday, returns after keeping Southampton's only clean sheet away from home at Middlesbrough. Neil Moss, pushed down to third choice for the No 1 jersey, has been loaned to Gillingham for the rest of the season. **NS**

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR

Those of a nostalgic persuasion at Tottenham will recall the day at Stamford Bridge in 1990 when Chelsea were beaten 2-1. Such sweet memories. Since that glorious occasion, at the turn of the decade, the good and great of north and west London have met 16 times . . . and Tottenham have failed to win 16 times. Chelsea have won eight, drawn eight, and should start as favourites when rivalry is renewed at White Hart Lane today. Jinx, hoodoo, bogey, whatever — the seven-year itch needs to be scratched. **RK**

WEST HAM UNITED

With so much unrest at Upton Park, West Ham may not be too unhappy at resuming their bid for survival on the road. Blackburn Rovers, who were bottom of the Premiership when West Ham beat them in October, have shown how quickly things can change. "Their recovery is down to hard work," Mike Newell, the former Rovers striker now on loan in east London, said. He scored against West Ham in this fixture last year; a first goal for his new club would not go amiss. **KP**

WIMBLEDON

Although Chris Perry did not make the England squad (despite a glowing reference from Alex Ferguson), Neil Sullivan, the goalkeeper, will join Wimbledon's growing list of internationals when Craig Brown names his Scotland squad on Monday. Despite rumours of a takeover bid by Celtic, the rest of the club will probably not be following him north of the border just yet. Ardley and Jones hope to be fit to face Middlesbrough as Wimbledon look for their first Premiership win of 1997. **NS**

Reports: Brian Glanville, Peter Ball, Russell Kempson, Richard Hobson, Nick Szczepanik, Keith Pike, David Maddock. Statistics: Julian Desborough

ASTON VILLA v SUNDERLAND

TICKETS: Seats available

10-YEAR RECORD: —, —, —, —, 3-0, —, —, —, —, —

HOW THEY LINE UP

ASTON VILLA (from): M Bosnich, F Nelson, A Wright, C Tiler, U Ehiogu, R Scimeca, S Corcic, S Staunton, G Southgate, D Yorke, S Milosevic, J Joachim, G Farrelly, D Hughes, L Hendrie, S Murray, M Oakes.

SUNDERLAND (from): L Perez, G Hall, R Ord, A Melville, D Kubicki, D Kelly, P Bracewell, D Williams, M Gray, A Rae, C Russell, M Smith, J Eriksson, S Aiston, D Preece, P Heckingbottom.

LEEDS UNITED v ARSENAL

TICKETS: Seats available

10-YEAR RECORD: —, —, —, —, 2-2, 2-2, 3-0, 2-1, 1-0, 0-3.

HOW THEY LINE UP

LEEDS UNITED (from): N Martyn, R Molenaar, G Halle, D Wetherall, L Radebe, G Kelly, C Palmer, L Bowyer, M Jackson, A Dorigo, R Wallace, B Deane, I Rush, I Harte, M Ford, P Beesley, M Beeney.

ARSENAL (from): D Seaman, L Dixon, M Rose, A Adams, S Bould, N Winterburn, R Parlour, P Vieira, S Hughes, I Wright, P Merson, S Marshall, S Morrow, J Hartson, I Selley, P Shaw, J Lukic.

LEADING SCORERS

17: I Wright (Arsenal), A Shearer (Newcastle United)
12: D Yorke (Aston Villa), R Fowler (Liverpool), L Ferdinand (Newcastle United)
11: O G Solskjaer (Manchester United)
10: F Ravanelli (Middlesbrough), M Le Tissier (Southampton)
9: C Sutton (Blackburn Rovers), E Ekoku (Wimbledon)
8: G Vialli (Chelsea), D Dublin (Coventry City), M Bayle (Wimbledon).

CHAMPIONSHIP BETTING

Evens: Manchester United, 3-1: Liverpool, 9-2: Arsenal, 5-1: Newcastle United, 12-1: Chelsea, 40-1: Aston Villa and Wimbledon.

Odds supplied by Ladbrokes

BLACKBURN ROVERS v WEST HAM UNITED

TICKETS: Seats available

10-YEAR RECORD: —, —, —, 5-4, 3-1, —, —, 0-2, 4-2, 4-2

HOW THEY LINE UP

BLACKBURN ROVERS (from): T Flowers, J Kenna, H Berg, C Hendry, G le Saux, T Sherwood, G Flitcroft, L Bohinen, J Wilcox, C Sutton, K Gallacher, G Donis, N Marker, W McKinlay, P Warhurst, S Given, N Gudmundsson.

WEST HAM UNITED (from): L Miklosko, T Breacker, M Rieper, S Bilic, J Dicks, D Williamson, I Bishop, M Hughes, K Rowland, M Newell, H Porfirio, S Jones, F Lampard, S Lazaridis, R Ferdinand, M Bowen, L Sealey, S Potts.

MANCHESTER UNITED v SOUTHAMPTON

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: 5-1, 0-2, 2-2, 2-1, 3-2, 1-0, 2-1, 2-0, 2-1, 4-1.

HOW THEY LINE UP

MANCHESTER UNITED (from): P Schmeichel, M Clegg, G Neville, G Pallister, D Irwin, D Beckham, R Keane, P Scholes, R Giggs, E Cantona, O G Solskjaer, A Cole, B McClair, K Poborsky, C Casper, R van der Gouw.

SOUTHAMPTON (from): M Taylor, U van Gobbel, R Dryden, K Monkou, A Neilson, N Maddison, M Oakley, J Magilton, M le Tissier, E Berkovic, E Ostenstad, S Charlton, C Lundekvam, D Hughes, M Robinson, S Basham, D Beasant.

WIMBLEDON v MIDDLESBROUGH

TICKETS: Seats available

10-YEAR RECORD: —, —, 1-1, —, —, —, 2-0, —, —, 0-0

HOW THEY LINE UP

WIMBLEDON (from): N Sullivan, K Cunningham, A Kimble, D Blackwell, O Leonhardsen, R Earle, E Ekoku, D Holdsworth, M Gayle, J Goodman, C Perry, D Jupp, P Fear, B McAllister, M Harford, V Jones, N Ardley, B Murphy.

MIDDLESBROUGH (from): G Walsh, B Roberts, C Fleming, N Cox, S Vickers, G Festa, D Whyte, V Kinder, R Mustoe, Emerson, Juninho, C Blackmore, A Moore, M Beck, P Stamp, P Whelan.

DERBY COUNTY v LIVERPOOL

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: —, 1-1, 0-1, 0-3, 1-7, —, —, —, —, —

HOW THEY LINE UP

DERBY COUNTY (from): R Hoult, J Laursen, P McGrath, G Rowett, L Carsley, R van der Laan, A Asanovic, P Trollope, C Powell, R Willems, D Sturridge, D Powell, M Taylor, P Simpson, M Ramberg, S Flynn.

LIVERPOOL (from): D James, J McAteer, B Kvarme, M Wright, P Babb, S I Bjornebye, S McManaman, J Barnes, M Thomas, P Berger, S Collymore, R Fowler, J Redknapp, J Carragher, R Jones, A Warner.

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY v COVENTRY CITY

TICKETS: Seats available

10-YEAR RECORD: 2-2, 0-3, 1-2, 0-0, —, 1-1, 1-2, 0-0, 5-1, 4-3.

HOW THEY LINE UP

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY (from): K Pressman, M Clarke, P Atherton, D Stefanovic, S Oakes, D Walker, I Nolan, S Nicol, G Whittingham, G Hyde, M Pembridge, R Blinker, R Humphreys, A Booth, W Collins, R Jones, O Trustfull, B Carbone, J Newsome.

COVENTRY CITY (from): S Ogrizovic, R Shaw, P Williams, P Telfer, E Jess, G McAllister, J Salako, N Whelan, K Richardson, B Borrows, J Filan, W Boland, G Strachan, A Willis, S Shilton, D Huckerby.

TOMORROW

NEWCASTLE UNITED v LEICESTER CITY

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: 2-0, —, —, 5-4, 2-1, 2-0, 7-1, —, 3-1, —.

HOW THEY LINE UP

NEWCASTLE UNITED (from): S Hislop, S Watson, R Elliott, D Peacock, P Albert, D Batty, R Lee, K Gillespie, D Ginola, P Beardsley, A Shearer, L Ferdinand, F Asprilla, L Clark, W Barton, J Beresford, P Srnicek, R Kitson.

LEICESTER CITY (from): K Keller, S Grayson, N Lewis, J Lawrence, C Hill, S Prior, M Elliott, J Watts, M Izzet, G Parker, S Taylor, S Campbell, S Wilson, E Heskey, I Marshall, M Robins, S Claridge, K Poole.

EVERTON v NOTTINGHAM FOREST

TICKETS: Seats available

10-YEAR RECORD: 2-0, 1-0, 1-1, 4-0, 0-0, 1-1, 3-0, —, 1-2, 3-0

HOW THEY LINE UP

EVERTON (from): P Gerrard, E Barrett, T Phelan, C Short, D Watson, D Unsworth, G Stuart, J Parkinson, A Grant, D Ferguson, M Branch, N Barmby, N Southall, R Dunne, M Hottiger, G Speed, P Rideout.

NOTTINGHAM FOREST (from): M Crossley, D Lyttle, S Pearce, C Cooper, S Chettle, C Bart-Williams, D Phillips, A I Haaland, I Woan, N Clough, K Campbell, C Allen, B Roy, D Saunders, J Lee, S Gemmill, S Guinan, P McGregor, J Burns, Fettis.

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR v CHELSEA

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: 1-3, 1-0, —, 1-4, 1-1, 1-3, 1-2, 1-1, 0-0, 1-1

HOW THEY LINE UP

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR (from): I Walker, S Campbell, C Wilson, D Howells, D Anderton, R Fox, A Sinton, R Rosenthal, S Carr, S Nethercott, J Edinburgh, E Beardsley, A Nielsen, R Allen, D Austin, S Iversen.

CHELSEA (from): K Hitchcock, S Clarke, F Leboeuf, F Sinclair, D Petrescu, D Wise, R di Matteo, E Newton, S Minto, G Zola, M Hughes, G Vialli, R Gullit, A Myers, P Hughes, E Johnsen, F Grodas, J Morris.

WHEN TO WATCH ON TELEVISION

[illegible]

BBC1 Match of the Day 10.45pm (including extended highlights of Derby County v Liverpool and Leeds United v Arsenal)

Tomorrow

Sky Sports 1 Goals on Sunday 11.00am

Sky Sports 1 Newcastle United v Leicester City 3.00pm (live)

The official Internet site of the FA Carling Premiership is at http://www.fa-carling.com/

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RACING

Coome Hill can take giant step towards summit

By Richard Evans, Racing Correspondent

A WEEKEND brimful with Cheltenham Festival clues on both sides of the Irish Sea begins at Sandown this afternoon with Coome Hill attempting to enhance his position in the Gold Cup pecking order.

The Walter Dennis-trained winner of the Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup has not raced since his magnificent victory at Newbury nine weeks ago and faces a tough task as he attempts to give weight away to five rivals in the Agfa Diamond Chase (1.50).

The going at the Esher track has been a worry all week for Dennis but, after talking with Jamie Osborne, he decided Coome Hill should take his chance. "It is not so fast as it was when he won at Wincanton and they climb up a hill when they get to the business end of the race, which helps. One has reservations, but he needs a run and I can't see this weather relenting," the Devon permit-holder said yesterday.

"I am reasonably happy with him. Obviously it is long time since he's raced but he has done some good work for me at home, although he is not the sort to burn up the gallops. You have to do as much as you can to get him fit and we have done our best."

Major Summit, who also holds a Gold Cup entry, is unquestionably best in at the weights judged on his third to Mr Mulligan at Ascot last season — and a liberal interpretation of this season's efforts. If the Josh Gifford-trained runner avoids the jumping errors which have cost him two victories this term — and copes with today's faster surface — he will go very close. But they are big "ifs" in this class of race.

Go Ballistic seems to save his best for Ascot and although Dextra Dove bounced back to form at Kempton 15 days ago this is a tougher assignment. Avro Anson ran a blinder behind Jodami and Unguided Missile at Haydock a fortnight ago when he was not 100 per cent fit. First past the post in the 1994 Stayers' Hurdle, Maurice Camacho's runner is still lightly raced over fences and open to further improvment. He relishes fast going so should give his running.

However, I cannot desert **Coome Hill**, a progressive chaser who is open to further improvement and is probably one of the best jumpers of fences in training. His surefootedness could make all the difference, especially when it comes to tackling the tricky railway fences at Sandown.

While punters may be wise to watch rather than have a wager in the Gold Cup trial, they should not hesitate to step in smartly this morning and help themselves to the double-figure odds (12-1 with Victor Chandler) being offered against **Tarrs Bridge** in the Tote Bookmakers Sandown Handicap Hurdle (2.25).

Charlie Mann's former Irish point-to-point winner has won three of his four starts over hurdles this term but it was his victory at Cheltenham seven weeks ago, when equipped with blinkers for the first time, that makes him a betting proposition today.

In a grade two race, where five of his rivals had won their previous start, the six-year-old won easily in a fast time. Tarrs Bridge holds Sun Alliance Hurdle and Stayers' Hurdle entries and Mann, who could have gone for a much easier race at Chepstow today, said: "We honestly don't know how good he is. He runs well fresh and is in cracking form. I should have put the blinkers on him earlier. He thinks he has done enough when he hits the front — he's not naughty."

Tullymurry Toff and Yahmi head the opposition but, at the available odds, Tarrs Bridge is outstanding value and can continue the impressive record of second-season horses with a light weight in this race.

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: TARRS BRIDGE
(2.25 Sandown Park)
Next best: Full Of Oats
(2.15 Chepstow)

JULIAN HERBERT

Glitter Isle takes command in the Adventure Novices' Chase at Lingfield yesterday

Full Of Oats can harvest National trial

TODAY'S RACES ON TELEVISION

CHEPSTOW
BBC1

1.15: Plenty of pace here, with General Pershing, Denver Bay, Mariners Mirror, Sound Reveille and the quirky Senor El Betrutti all liking to race prominently — which could tee this up for **Bells Life**, a course specialist. The winner of all his three starts here, he ran well at Newton Abbot 12 days ago when carrying top weight, after a disappointing effort at Lingfield. Denver Bay is well weighted but would prefer softer ground or further; and Sound Reveille looks a bigger danger.

1.45: Korbell, a multiple point-to-point winner last season, does not look the easiest ride but recorded a fast time when gaining her first win over hurdles at Leicester 18 days ago. However, the victory of the well regarded **Hurdante** at Leicester 11 days ago suggested there is better to come and the step up to three miles can bring about the necessary improvement.

2.15: Full Of Oats stands out here. A winner of three chases last term, including two over this distance, Henrietta Knight's useful handicapper made a pleasing seasonal debut at this track behind Samlee and was running a big race at Kelso 15 days ago before making an uncharacteristic jumping error. With Jim Culloty back on board, he can resume winning ways. Spuffington is consistent but rather one-paced, and Sunley Bay looks the main threat.

SANDOWN
CHANNEL 4

12.45: Land Afar's defeat of Mister Drum reads well but Paul Webber's horse is far from certain to stay this longer trip. Aardwolf is best judged on his defeat of Major Summit here 53 days ago, but the ground will be plenty fast enough and he is likely to be taken on for the lead by Stately Home. **Simply Dashing** has won 11 of his last 13 starts and goes from strength to strength over fences. He will take all the beating.

1.20: With the fast ground having prevented the participation of Collier Bay, Relkeel and Mister Morose, the way looks clear for **Chief's Song**. He will relish today's fast surface and won over course and distance last season. Ground Nut returns after a ten-week absence and probably needs further. Ionio disappointed last week, while Florid is making his hurdling debut.

1.50: See left.

2.25: See left.

Richard Evans

SANDOWN PARK

THUNDERER

12.45 Aardwolf
1.20 Florid
1.50 MAJOR SUMMIT (nap)
2.25 Mr Kermit
3.00 Belmarita
3.30 *Certainly Strong*
4.05 Riding Crop

The Times Private Handicapper's top rating:
12.45 SIMPLY DASHING.

GOING: GOOD (GOOD TO FIRM IN PLACES) SIS

12.45 SCILLY ISLES NOVICES CHASE C4

(Grade I: £21,862: 2m 4f 110yd) (7 runners)

1	PPP-113	AARDWOLF 37 (C,BF,G,S) (Lady Camilla Dempster) C Brooks 6-11-6	G Bradley	95
2	5014-24	AMBER VALLEY 21F (S) (Berkshire Components) D Williams 6-11-6	A Thornton	63
3	460-F1F	GROOVING 9 (G,S) (Mrs T Brown) J Gifford 8-11-6	P Niven	71
4	4-12221	LAND AFAR 14 (F,G,S) (T Ford) P Webber 10-11-6	J Osborne	97
5	121122	MISTER DRUM 14 (D,F,G,S) (M Bachelor) M Wilkinson 8-11-6	W Marston	92
6	11F111	SIMPLY DASHING 14 (D,F,G,S) (S Hammond) T Easterby 6-11-6	R Dunwoody	[illegible]
7	224121	STATELY HOME 51 (CD,F,G) (P Bowen) P Bowen 6-11-6	N Williamson	98

BETTING: 5-4 Simply Dashing, 7-2 Land Afar, 4-1 Aardwolf, 6-1 Mister Drum, 10-1 Grooving, 12-1 Stately Home, 50-1 Amber Valley

1996: SENOR EL BETRUTTI 7-11-6 G Bradley (11-2) Mrs S Nock 6 ran

FORM FOCUS

AARDWOLF 1¾l 3rd of 5 to Djeddah in grade I Feltham Novices Chase at Kempton (3m, good to firm). AMBER VALLEY 9l 2nd of 7 to River Leven in novice handicap chase at Huntingdon (2m 110yds, good to soft) on penultimate start. GROOVING beat Coast Master head in 12-runner novice chase at Exeter (2m 2f, soft) on penultimate start. LAND AFAR beat MISTER DRUM 5l in 5-runner novice chase at Kempton (2m, good to firm). SIMPLY DASHING beat Ballyline 10l in 4-runner novice chase at Haydock (2m 4f, good to firm). STATELY HOME beat Strong Medicine 12l in 5-runner handicap chase over course and distance (good).
Selection: SIMPLY DASHING

1.20 AGFA HURDLE (£10,163: 2m 110yd) (6 runners) C4

1	3P4-165	CHIEF'S SONG 14 (CD,F,G) (Mrs A Dennet) S Dow 7-11-4	R Dunwoody	[illegible]
2	4113-35	GROUND NUT 71 (D,F,S) (Mrs R Haslam) R Buckler 7-11-0	P Holley	89
3	124	IONIO 7 (D,G) (Mrs R Key) Mrs V Ward 6-11-0	J R Kavanagh	81
4	00	DAUNT 11 (Supercraft Ind) F Jordan 5-10-9	A Thornton	—
5		FLORID 94F (Lord Howard de Walden) C Brooks 6-10-9	G Bradley	—
6	212F32-	DOUBLE SYMPHONY 282 (D,G,S) (A Pye-Jeary) C Brooks 9-10-4	J Osborne	—

BETTING: 9-4 Double Symphony, 5-2 Chief's Song, 4-1 Florid, 6-1 Daunt, 7-1 Ground Nut, 10-1 Ionio

1996: ATOURS 8-11-8 R Dunwoody (8-11 fav) D Elsworth 5 ran

FORM FOCUS

CHIEF'S SONG best recent effort beat Warm Spell 1l in 5-runner hurdle at Kempton (2m, good to firm). GROUND NUT about 6¾l 5th of 8 to Executive Design in handicap hurdle at Ascot (2m 110yds, good). IONIO head 2nd of 12 to Sea Victor in novice hurdle at Doncaster (2m 110yd, good to firm) penultimate start. DAUNT 39l 7th of 18 to Sanmartino in novice hurdle at Leicester (2m, good to soft). FLORID best recent effort about 2½l 3rd of 9 to Bright Water in conditions race at Newmarket (1m 2f, good to firm) on penultimate start. DOUBLE SYMPHONY short-head 2nd of 7 to Ventana Canyon in grade III Tripleprint Novices Chase at Punchestown (2m, soft) April 96.
Selection: IONIO

1.50 AGFA DIAMOND CHASE C4

(Grade II: limited handicap: £18,714: 3m 110yd) (6 runners)

1	1/12-111	COOME HILL 63 (F,G,S) (Mrs J Dennis) W Dennis 8-11-12	J Osborne	[illegible]
2	12125-3	AVRO ANSON 14 (D,F,G) (B Shirran) M Camacho 9-11-8	P Niven	98
3	12F-5P1	DEXTRA DOVE 15 (C,D,F,G,S) (Dextra Lighting) S Earle 10-11-2	N Williamson	96
4	61-4121	GO BALLISTIC 42 (D,F,G,S) (Mrs B Lockhart) J G O'Shea 8-11-0	R Dunwoody	95
5	1113-02	MAJOR SUMMIT 56 (C,BF,G,S) (A Weller) J Gifford 8-10-13	P Hide	94
6	6P011-3	NORTHERN HIDE 49 (F,G,S) (Northern Hide Partners) M Salaman 11-10-6	P Holley	96

BETTING: 3-1 Coome Hill, 7-2 Avro Anson, 4-1 Go Ballistic, 5-1 Dextra Dove, Major Summit, 8-1 Northern Hide, 10-1 others.

1996: ANTRAK EXPRESS 9-10-7 M A Fitzgerald (11-2) N Henderson 3 ran

FORM FOCUS

COOME HILL beat The Grey Monk 4l in 11-runner grade I Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup at Newbury (3m 2f 110yds, good) with DEXTRA DOVE (11lb better off) 33½l 5th. AVRO ANSON about 1½l 3rd of 6 to Jodami in grade II Peter Marsh Limited Handicap Chase at Haydock (3m, good to firm). DEXTRA DOVE beat Philip's Woody 3l in 5-runner handicap chase at Kempton (3m, good to firm). GO BALLISTIC beat Unguided Missile 1¾l in 9-runner handicap chase at Ascot (3m 110yds, good to firm) with DEXTRA DOVE (7lb better off) pulled up before last. MAJOR SUMMIT short-head 2nd of 4 to Aardwolf in chase over course and distance (good). NORTHERN HIDE best effort beat The Crazy Bishop head in 9-runner grade III Tedcastles Oil Handicap Chase at Leopardstown (2m 3f, yielding to soft) Jan 96.
Selection: COOME HILL (nap)

2.25 TOTE BOOKMAKERS SANDOWN HANDICAP HURDLE C4

(Grade III: £27,700: 2m 6f) (13 runners)

1	1/206-30	EXPRESS GIFT 21 (G,S) (Homer, Young, Arnold) Mrs M Reveley 8-11-10	N Smith	85
2	405-112	BURNT IMP 63 (BF,F,G,S) (N Mason) G Moore 7-11-5	J Callaghan	92
3	01P/60-1	FIRED EARTH 105 (F,S) (Mrs J Fanshawe) J Fanshawe 9-11-4	N Williamson	92
4	U111-02	ERZADJAN 9 (D,F,G,S) (D Hall) Mrs M Reveley 7-11-2	P Niven	97
5	1611-11	TULLYMURRY TOFF 73 (F,G) (J Wilson) J Jefferson 6-11-1	E Callaghan (3)	[illegible]
6	3F414-6	MR KERMIT 99 (G) (D Blagden) A J Wilson 6-10-13	L Harvey	90
7	2P05-11	YAHMI 51 (CD,G) (W Sturt) J Old 7-10-12	J Osborne	98
8	P11102	LOCHNAGRAIN 16 (D,F,G,S) (Lightbody, [illegible]) Mrs M Reveley 9-10-12	G Lee (3)	94
9	3011-44	OUTSET 42 (D,BF,G,S) (M Kilner) M Hammond 7-10-12	Mr C Bonner (3)	98
10	3-21240	LANSDOWNE 12 (D,G,S) (R Desmond) P Nicholls 9-10-12	O Burrows (5)	92
11	2-16222	RUNAWAY PETE 50 (F,G) (J Smeaden) M Pipe 7-10-12	R Dunwoody	91
12	60-1121	TARRS BRIDGE 49 (B,D,F,G) (Tuesday Synd) C Mann 6-10-9	J Railton	93
13	531214	TIM 15 (D,BF,F,S) (P Peter) J Jenkins 7-10-3	—	90

BETTING: 11-4 Yahmi, 7-2 Tullymurry Toff, 8-1 Tarrs Bridge, Erzadjan, 10-1 Runaway Pete, Lochnagrain, Outset, 14-1 others.

1996: TRAINGLOT 9-11-1 R Dunwoody (6-1) J Fitzgerald 14 ran

FORM FOCUS

BURNT IMP beat Crystal Gift 2½l in 10-runner handicap hurdle at Ayr (2m 4f, good) on penultimate start. FIRED EARTH beat Call My Guest 10l in 5-runner handicap hurdle at Kempton (2m 5f, good to firm). TULLYMURRY TOFF beat Call My Guest 6l in 5-runner handicap hurdle at Uttoxeter (2m 4f 110yds, good to firm) on penultimate start. YAHMI beat Jack Tanner head in 6-runner grade II Bovis Crowngap Winter Novices Hurdle over course and distance (good). RUNAWAY PETE 1¾l 2nd of 10 to Elburg in handicap hurdle at Cheltenham (3m 110yds, good) with ERZADJAN (4lb better off) 22½l 7th. TARRS BRIDGE beat Southern Nights 6l in 5-runner grade II Bristol Novices Hurdle at Cheltenham (3m 110yds, good to firm).
Selection: ERZADJAN

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS	Wins	Rnrs	%	JOCKEYS	Winners	Rides	%
P Nicholls	6	17	35.3	R Dunwoody	29	90	32.2
D Nicholson	30	86	34.9	W Marston	5	31	16.1
Mrs M Reveley	5	19	26.3	J Osborne	15	100	15.0
R Hodges	6	26	23.1	P Niven	3	21	14.3
J Old	7	32	21.9	P Hide	10	75	13.3
S Dow	5	23	21.7	G Bradley	9	73	12.3

3.00 RIPLEY JUVENILE NOVICES HURDLE

(4-Y-O: £3,518: 2m 110yd) (10 runners)

1	1	NAME OF OUR FATHER 21F (D,F) (T Morris) P Bowen 11-4	D Walsh	75
2	6	GO WITH THE WIND 51 (A Chadwick) C Weedon 11-0	M Richards	70
3	P	MACMORRIS 7 (B) (R Tooth) D Elsworth 11-0	P Holley	—
4	00	MAGIC ROLE 15 (M Ferguson) J Jenkins 11-0	W Marston	—
5	24	NORTHERN FLEET 11 (Racing For Pleasure) Mrs A Perrett 11-0	G Bradley	97
6	S2	SOCIETY MAGIC 50 (K Ayres) C Mann 11-0	R Dunwoody	[illegible]
7		HAYAAIN 196F (Quicksilver Partners) K Bailey 10-10	J Railton	—
8	26	BELMARITA 57 (BF) (G Hubbard) G Hubbard 10-9	N Williamson	82
9		HEART 63F (C Brasher) Miss H Knight 10-5	J Osborne	—
10		SILVRETTA 92F (B & M McHugh) J Gifford 10-5	P Hide	—

BETTING: 3-1 Hayaain, 7-2 Heart, 9-2 Silvretta, 5-1 Society Magic, 7-1 Northern Fleet, 10-1 Belmarita, 12-1 Name Of Our Father, 16-1 others.

1996: DEBUTANTE DAYS 10-5 J F Titley (13-2) Miss H Knight 14 ran

3.30 ELMBRIDGE HANDICAP CHASE

(£6,440: 2m) (5 runners)

1	11-2322	GALES CAVALIER 14 (D,G,S) (Starlight Racing) D Gandolfo 9-11-13	J Osborne	90
2	211411	SUPER TACTICS 15 (D,F,G,S) (H Perry) R Alner 9-10-3	P Henley (3)	97
3	4125-41	WEE RIVER 15 (D,F,G,S) (S Graham) G Moore 8-10-0	J Callaghan	[illegible]
4	210/211-	CERTAINLY STRONG 386 (CD,G,S) (N Skelton) D Nicholson 7-10-0	R Dunwoody	94
5	00411-3	HEDGEHOPPER 76 (F,G,S) (D Knox) C Weedon 9-10-0	DOUBTFUL	82

Long handicap: Wee River 9-10, Certainly Strong 9-9, Hedgehopper 8-5

BETTING: 13-8 Gales Cavalier, 15-8 Super Tactics, 11-4 Certainly Strong, 9-2 Wee River.

1996: HIGH BARON 9-10-13 R Dunwoody (6-1) R Hodges 3 ran

4.05 FEBRUARY MAIDEN HURDLE

(£3,087: 2m 6f) (11 runners)

1	1-5	ARCTIC TRIUMPH 68 (G) (D Holman) M Bradstock 6-11-7	P Holley	—
2	6-	CAMERA MAN 413 (Mrs P Shaw) N Henderson 7-11-7	J R Kavanagh	88
3	02-405	COUNTRY TARQUIN 14 (Miss C James) R Hodges 5-11-7	R Dunwoody	91
4	1-25	DANCETILLYOUDROP 61 (G) (D Millard) P Nicholls 6-11-7	N Williamson	98
5	032-33P	EL FREDDIE 46 (BF) (M Lovatt) J Old 7-11-7	L Harvey	98
6	10-	GRANHAM PRIDE 318 (S) (J S Racing) K Bailey 7-11-7	J Osborne	—
7	24	LORD KHALICE 68 (G Hubbard) G Hubbard 6-11-7	N Rossiter (7)	87
8	55/0-060	PHYSICAL FUN 9 (A Blackmore) A Blackmore 6-11-7	P Henley (3)	88
9	04	RED BRONZE 56 ([illegible]) C Barwell 6-11-7	G Bradley	83
10	35-25	RIDING CROP 64 (Barrow Boys) N Henderson 7-11-7	P Niven	[illegible]
11	54-4052	BLAZING MIRACLE 15 (Mrs R Henderson) Mrs R Henderson 5-11-2	D Salter (5)	84

BETTING: 7-2 Camera Man, 4-1 Riding Crop, 9-2 Granham Pride, 6-1 Dancetillyoudrop, 8-1 El Freddie, 10-1 Lord Khalice, 12-1 Blazing Miracle, 14-1 others.

1996: WHATTABOB 7-11-7 M A Fitzgerald (2-1) N Henderson 20 ran

Fitzgerald injures ankle

MICK FITZGERALD will be out for up to ten days after cracking a small bone in his ankle in a last-fence fall from Conquering Leader at Folkestone on Thursday. Fitzgerald will miss the rides on Go Ballistic in the Agfa Diamond Chase at Sandown today and Belmont King in the Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup at Leopardstown tomorrow.

CHEPSTOW

THUNDERER

1.15 Bells Life
1.45 Destin D'Estruval
2.15 *Full Of Oats*
2.50 Urban Lily
3.20 Indian Tracker
3.55 *Chaprassi*

GOING: GOOD (GOOD TO SOFT IN PLACES) SIS
TOTE JACKPOT MEETING

1.15 BBC CEEFAX AND MARCIA-ANN COOPER HANDICAP CHASE BBC1

(£7,555: 2m 3f 110yd) (11 runners)

101	3PP-435	SOUND REVEILLE 14 (G,S) (Mrs G Abecassis) C Brooks 9-12-0	M Berry (7)	93
102	3124U3/	GENERAL PERSHING 652 (F,G,S) (J Potter) D Nicholson 11-12-0	R Johnson	—
103	P1F-5P3	SENOR EL BETRUTTI 15 (D,F,G,S) (G Nock) Mrs S Nock 8-11-12	C Llewellyn	97
104	11P-6P4	TERAO 49 (S) (B Kilpatrick) M Pipe 11-11-6	T J Murphy	[illegible]
105	112-163	BELLS LIFE 12 (CD,S) (R Gibbs) P Hobbs 8-11-4	G Tormey	95
106	20-3111	MARINERS MIRROR 42 (D,G,S) (F Mills) N Twiston-Davies 10-10-13	Mr M Rimell	90
107	5103-63	DENVER BAY 56 (S) (R Naylor) J Gifford 10-10-12	L Aspell (3)	96
108	P11/FPU	BO KNOWS BEST 49 (CD,F,G,S) (D Humphreys) G L Moore 8-10-8	C Maude	—
109	23UP53	CONTI D'ESTRUVAL 42 (D,F,G) (B Reay) G Balding 7-10-8	B Clifford	97
110	14355-5	SEEK THE FAITH 61 (C,BF,S) (R Matthews) M Sheppard 8-10-0	B Powell	91
111	33-134P	BENJAMIN LANCASTER 12 (C,G,S) (M Griffin) M Griffin 13-10-0	M Griffiths (7)	88

Long handicap: Benjamin Lancaster 9-4

BETTING: 5-2 Mariners Mirror, 5-1 Sound Reveille, 6-1 Bells Life, 7-1 Denver Bay, Conti D'Estruval, 8-1 Terao, 10-1 General Pershing, 12-1 others.

1996: MEETING ABANDONED — FROST

FORM FOCUS

SOUND REVEILLE 3l 5th of 6 to Konvekta King in handicap chase at Haydock (2m, good to firm). SENOR EL BETRUTTI 3l 3rd of 7 to Super Tactics in handicap chase at Kempton (2m, good to firm). BELLS LIFE best recent effort beat Beau Babillard 16l in 4-runner handicap chase over course and distance (good to soft) with BENJAMIN LANCASTER (16lb worse off) 24½l 3rd. MARINERS MIRROR beat Kendal Cavalier 4l in 5-runner novice chase at Lingfield (3m, good to soft). CONTI D'ESTRUVAL best effort beat DENVER BAY (13lb better off) 5l in 8-runner handicap chase at Huntingdon (2m 4f 110yd, good) March 96. SEEK THE FAITH 20¼l 5th of 6 to Mister Oddy in handicap chase at Worcester (2m, good to soft).
Selection: MARINERS MIRROR

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS	Wins	Rnrs	%	JOCKEYS	Winners	Rides	%
D Nicholson	15	48	31.3	D Bridgwater	19	73	26.0
M Pipe	50	185	27.0	G Tormey	4	16	25.0
P Hobbs	18	70	25.7	C Llewellyn	15	82	18.3
J Old	7	32	21.9	C Maude	5	44	11.4
P Nicholls	12	57	21.1	R Johnson	5	44	11.4

☐ **Jim Culloty returns at Chepstow today after four months off with a broken ankle. Culloty, last season's leading amateur, has been booked to ride Menesonic for Robert Alner in the Prestige Novices' Hurdle and Full Of Oats for Henrietta Knight in the John Hughes Grand National Trial.**

GUIDE TO OUR IN-LINE RACECARD

101	113143	GOOD TIMES 13 (BF,F,G,S) (Mrs D Robinson) [illegible]	B West (7)	88

Racecard number. Six-figure form (F — fell P — pulled up U — unseated rider B — brought down S — slipped up R — refused D — disqualified). Horse's name. Days since last outing: F if flat (B — blinkers V — visor H — hood E — Eyeshield. C — course winner D — distance winner CD — course and distance winner BF — beaten favourite in latest race). Going on which horse has won (F — firm, good to firm, hard. G — good S — soft, good to soft, heavy). Owner in brackets. Trainer. Age and weight. Rider plus any allowance. The Times Private handicapper's rating.

1.45 PRESTIGE NOVICES HURDLE BBC1

(Grade II: £9,915: 3m) (11 runners)

201	34-1P12	EDGEMOOR PRINCE 16 (F,S) (The Racing Hares) P Hobbs 6-11-3	C Maude	76
202	01/2B-2	BEST OF FRIENDS 66 (G) (J McGrath) Miss H Knight 7-11-0	J F Titley	67
203	4254-23	DESTIN D'ESTRUVAL 18 (BF,S) (D Mercer) D Nicholson 6-11-0	D Bridgwater	[illegible]
204	2F3-330	EULOGY 11 (BF) (N Cooper) R Rowe 7-11-0	L Aspell	94
205	241-201	HURDANTE 11 (S) (TJA Consultants Ltd) G Balding 7-11-0	B Clifford	88
206	5253-42	MENESONIC 64 (Mrs W Walter) R Alner 7-11-0	J Culloty	76
207	20-14F1	SCOTBY 12 (S) (Mrs E Gardner) R Buckler 7-11-0	B Powell	71
208	54/23-31	TILTY 1 (V) (Cheadle Racing) A Streeter 7-11-0	DOUBTFUL	71
209	331-54	WARNER FOR PLAYERS 57 (BF,S) (T Warner Sports) P Hobbs 6-11-0	C Llewellyn	51
210	0FU321	YOUNG KENNY 18 (D,S) ([illegible]) P Beaumont 6-11-0	R Supple	97
211	21	KORBELL 18 (D,F,G,S) ([illegible]) P Nicholls 6-10-9	R Johnson	86

BETTING: 7-2 Hurdante, 9-2 Destin D'Estruval, 5-1 Korbell, 6-1 Eulogy, 7-1 Young Kenny, 10-1 Best Of Friends, Edgemoor Prince, 12-1 others.

FORM FOCUS

EDGEMOOR PRINCE beat Spring Saint 8l in 7-runner Exeter handicap hurdle (2m 2f, soft) penultimate start. BEST OF FRIENDS 5l 2nd of 9 to Sparkling Spring in Windsor novice hurdle (2m 4f, good). HURDANTE beat Mentmore Towers 5l in 12-runner Leicester novice hurdle (2m 4f, good to soft). SCOTBY beat Defendthereallm 4l in 16-runner Newton Abbot novice hurdle (2m 6f, heavy). YOUNG KENNY beat Montecot neck in 17-runner Leicester novice hurdle (3m, good to soft) with DESTIN D'ESTRUVAL (6lb worse off) head 3rd. KORBELL beat Flying Gunner neck in 14-runner Leicester novice hurdle (3m, good to soft).
Selection: HURDANTE

2.15 JOHN HUGHES GRAND NATIONAL TRIAL BBC1

(Handicap chase: £10,202: 3m 5f 110yd) (8 runners)

301	211F-5P	KILLESHIN 16 (G,S) (H Manners) H Manners 11-11-10	S Curran	98
302	24444-P	FLYER'S NAP 12 (G,S) (R Tory) R Alner 11-11-7	D Bridgwater	[illegible]
303	U24U0?2	DAKYNS BOY 56 (G,S) (A Parker) N Twiston-Davies 12-11-3	C Llewellyn	93
304	3111-3F	FULL OF OATS 15 (D,G,S) (R MacDonald) Miss H Knight 11-10-11	J Culloty	94
305	1563-44	SUNLEY BAY 16 (G,S) (Mrs M Barber) P Nicholls 11-10-11	R Johnson	92
306	6-54533	SPUFFINGTON 8 (C,G,S) ([illegible]) J Gifford 9-10-4	L Aspell (3)	90
307	1P00-43	SEE ENOUGH 12 (S) (J Meaden) R Buckler 9-10-1	S McNeill	85
308	1P/343-P	DISTILLATION 16 (G,S) (S Edwards) G Edwards 12-10-0	T Dascombe (3)	63

Long handicap: Distillation 7-10

BETTING: 9-4 Full Of Oats, 7-2 Dakyns Boy, 4-1 Spuffington, 9-2 Sunley Bay, 7-1 See Enough, 12-1 Killeshin, 14-1 others.

FORM FOCUS

DAKYNS BOY 2½l 3rd of 7 to Samlee in handicap chase here (3m 3f, good to soft) with FULL OF OATS (3lb worse off) short-head 3rd. FULL OF OATS best effort beat [illegible] neck in 12-runner Warwick handicap chase (3m 5f, good) March 96. SUNLEY BAY 4l 4th to Woodlands Genhire in Taunton handicap chase (4m 2f, good to firm) with KILLESHIN (10lb worse off) pulled up and DISTILLATION (12lb worse off) pulled up. SPUFFINGTON 4¾l 3rd to Court Melody in Folkestone handicap chase (3m 2f, good to soft).
Selection: DAKYNS BOY

2.50 POACHERS SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE

(£2,192: 2m 110yd) (17 runners)

401	60/43-23	FONTANAYS 46 (D,S) (M Dore) G McCourt 9-11-10	R Hobson (7)	90
402	32104-0	NEVER SO BLUE 45 (D,F) (P Bradley) P Bradley 6-11-9	Sophie Mitchell (5)	96
403	UF0	WIDE SUPPORT 5 (V,D,S) (A Moore) G L Moore 12-11-5	N Mann	—
404	451405	LITTLE HOOLIGAN 16 (BF,F) (A Fear) R Hodges 6-11-1	T Dascombe (3)	[illegible]
405	2-06220	LIME STREET BLUES 11 (B) (Cheltenham Racing Ltd) C Brooks 6-11-0	M Berry (7)	98
406	4330-04	KHATIR 16F (V,D,F,G,S) ([illegible]) M Pipe 6-10-13	C Maude	94
407	50S2P-6	JONJAS CHUDLEIGH 78 (D,G) (R Frost) R Frost 10-10-13	J Frost	95
408	0-10140	URBAN LILY 9 (B,G,S) (Mrs C Cole) R Hodges 7-10-12	J Harris (7)	98
409	522-053	STRIKE-A-POSE 8F (D,S) (Four Star RC) B Llewellyn 7-10-11	Mr J L Llewellyn	93
410	0-046	TEE TEE TOO 16 (S Brown) A Carroll 5-10-10	M Griffiths (7)	91
411	0P0-403	SCOTTISH WEDDING 24F (S) (G Westman) T Wall 7-10-10	R Johnson	91
412	FP0/05P-	DEEP ISLE 325 (G,S) (P Harrington) B Llewellyn 11-10-10	R Supple	—
413	53P44P-	MICK THE YANK 387 (P Gardner) H Oliver 7-10-8	Mr H Oliver (7)	88
414	544/P0P	BILL AND WIN 44 (V,D,S) (S Pickering) T Wall 6-10-0	R Farrant	—
415	0U-P	ANOTHERONE TO NOTE 159 (H Manners) H Manners 6-10-0	A Dowling (7)	—
416	0000	HAWANAFA 10 (B) (D Hammerson) J Moore 4-10-0	S McNeill	80
417	42P00P-	GILBERT 247 (F) (D Carey) D Carey 9-10-0	B Powell	80

Long handicap: Bill And Win 9-12, Anotherone To Note 9-9, Hawanafa 9-7, Gilbert 9-4.

BETTING: 4-1 Lime Street Blues, 5-1 Khatir, 6-1 Fontanays, 7-1 Urban Lily, 8-1 Little Hooligan, Strike-A-Pose, 10-1 Never So Blue, 12-1 others.

3.20 TONY PRESTON ASPIRING CHAMPIONS NOVICES CHASE

(£5,412: 3m) (12 runners)

501	411F-11	BARONET 71 (D,F,G,S) (Mrs D Thompson) D Nicholson 7-11-11	R Johnson	81
502	20/22-11	BERUDE NOT TO 50 (D,F,G,S) (G Addiscott) O Sherwood 8-11-11	J A McCarthy	[illegible]
503	6060-21	FOODBROKER STAR 49 (D,S) (Food Brokers Ltd) J Gifford 7-11-11	L Aspell (3)	92
504	F	CREDO IS KING 56 (G) (G Potter) P Webber 7-11-7	A Thornton	87
505	0/521-1	INDIAN TRACKER 43 (S) (J & J Richards) M Pipe 7-11-7	C Maude	86
506	0-P0	DEXTRA 64 (Dextra Lighting Systems) S Earle 7-11-2	S Curran	—
507	5-21524	KENDAL CAVALIER 12 (S) (M Digby) G Balding 7-11-2	B Clifford	74
508	1200-PP	MAJOR NOVA 47 (G,S) ([illegible]) N Smith 8-11-2	J Ryan	—
509	12F0F0	OATS N BARLEY 10 (G) ([illegible]) P Rodford 8-11-2	B Powell	—
510	3036-F4	PENNCALER 18 (Mrs A Taylor) P Hobbs 7-11-2	C Llewellyn	—
511	0/00P-	SWIFT POKEY 245 (Mrs B Palmer) D Williams 7-11-2	M Clarke	—
512	0/2141-P	TENNESSEE TWIST 80 (G,S) (Halewood Int Ltd) Mrs J Pitman 7-11-2	R Farrant	—

BETTING: 3-1 Berude Not To, 5-1 Baronet, Tennessee Twist, 6-1 Indian Tracker, 8-1 Credo Is King, Foodbroker Star, Kendal Cavalier, 12-1 others.

3.55 GAMEKEEPERS HANDICAP HURDLE

(£3,716: 2m 110yd) (15 runners)

601	2-61000	DREAMS END 14 (D,F,G,S) (T Price) P Bowen 9-12-0	R Farrant	[illegible]
602	5050-20	KADASTROF 7 (D,S) (A Paton) R Dickin 7-11-12	X Aizpuru (7)	98
603	53224-1	WHITE WILLOW 22F (V,D,F,G,S) (P Stringer) T Wall 8-11-9	R Massey (3)	98
604	21185/0-	BRAVE TORNADO 490 (D,S) ([illegible]) G Balding 6-11-9	B Clifford	—
605	0613-00	ROS CASTLE 14 (D,G,S) (Mrs R Dobson) R Hodges 6-11-8	J Harris (7)	—
606	4-111-4	CHAPRASSI 73 (BF,G,S) (B Kilpatrick) M Pipe 8-11-5	C Maude	90
607	021626	SLEW MAN 45 (D,S) (B Kilpatrick) M Pipe 6-11-4	G Supple (7)	—
608	215-025	KIBREET 14 (D,F,G,S) (Mrs J Emery) P Hobbs 10-11-2	R Johnson	—
609	42261-F	COURT NAP 28F (D,F,G) (Sir Michael Connell) S Mellor 5-10-10	C Llewellyn	92
610	2140-31	AMBLESIDE 49 (CD,S) (B Yim) Mrs S Williams 6-10-10	D Bridgwater	96
611	65100	DOCTOOR 101F (D,S) (A Watts) M Pipe 7-10-6	B Moore (7)	—
612	422-10-3	BELL ONE 45 (BF,F) (Mrs J Sellick) A Dunn 8-10-3	S McNeill	84
613	46/50-64	RIVER ISLAND 2 (D,S) (The White Harte Partnership) J Old 9-10-0	E Greehy (7)	82
614	64123,P	PENNYMOOR PRINCE 47 (S) (N Lake) R Frost 8-10-0	J Frost	—
615	2206-P0	MANOLETE 11 (D,G,S) (C Flear) Mrs M Jones 6-10-0	M Lane (7)	95

Long handicap: River Island 9-10, Pennymoor Prince 9-9, Manolete 9-7

BETTING: 11-4 Chaprassi, 6-1 Ambleside, 7-1 Kadastrof, 8-1 Slew Man, 10-1 Dreams End, Kibreet, 12-1 others

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Lingfield Park

Going: good, good to soft in places

1.30 (2m 3f 110yd hdle) 1, Cheerful Aspect (N Williamson, 5-1); 2, Ela Agapi Mou (33-1); 3, Pleasureland (7-1). Red Raja 15-8 fav. 13 ran. 10l, 2l. T Forster. Tote: £5.30; £3.00, £3.50, £1.90. DF: £457.40. Trio: £121.10 (part won, pool of £136.56 carried forward to 2.50 at Chepstow today). CSF: £146.90.

2.00 (2m 110yd hdle) 1, Script (J Osborne, 5-1); 2, Slightly Special (6-1); 3, Kentavrus Way (14-1). Glowing Path 9-4 fav. 8 ran. NR: Mullingar Con. 2l, 7l. J Jenkins. Tote: £6.90; £1.70, £1.70, £1.90. DF: £10.50. Trio: £79.90 (part won; pool of £15.77 carried forward to 2.50 at Chepstow today). CSF: £32.56. Tricast: £361.26.

2.30 (2m ch) 1, Glitter Isle (P Hide, 13-2); 2, Garolo (11-2); 3, As Du Trefle (14-1). Teinein 9-4 fav (f). 11 ran. NR: Windward Ariom. 2l, 5l. J Gifford. Tote: £6.90; £2.00, £2.30, £4.40. DF: £28.20. Trio: £80.60. CSF: £39.74.

3.00 (2m 110yd hdle) 1, Three Farthings (C Llewellyn, 13-8 fav, Richard Evans's nap); 2, Mutanassib (4-1); 3, Magic Combination (7-2). 10 ran. NR: Red River. 2l, 6l. J Old. Tote: £2.50; £1.30, £1.50, £1.60. DF: £5.60. Trio: £16.10. CSF: £8.49.

3.30 (3m ch) 1, Giventime (L Harvey, 7-2 fav); 2, A N C Express (4-1); 3, Plastic Spaceage (8-1). 10 ran. 2l, 4l. A Turnell. Tote: £4.60; £1.20, £1.60, £3.60. DF: £7.80. Trio: £23.90. CSF: £17.50. Tricast: £97.36.

4.00 (2m 3f 110yd hdle) 1, Equity's Darling (P Hide, 20-1); 2, Lady High Sheriff (5-1); 3, Steel Gem (4-1 fav). 15 ran. 1¼l, 13l. D O'Brien. Tote: £28.20; £6.50, £1.40, £1.60. DF: £54.60. Trio: £318.10. CSF: £113.75. Tricast: £461.83.

4.30 (2m 3f 110yd hdle) 1, Tickerty's Gift (M Atwater, 9-2); 2, Shepherds Rest (11-4); 3, Daily Sport Girl (12-1). Friendly House 5-2 fav. 6 ran. 8l, 7l. G L Moore. Tote: £5.00; £1.90, £1.80. DF: £9.60. CSF: £15.77.

Jackpot: not won (pool of £5,324.43 carried forward to Chepstow today).

Placepot: £307.40. Quadpot: £19.60.

Catterick Bridge

Going: good, good to firm in places

1.40 (3m hdle) 1, Russian Rascal (P Niven, 5-1); 2, J J Baboo (5-2 fav); 3, Arabian Heights (20-1). 19 ran. NR: Port Valenska, Respecting. 8l, 1½l. T Easterby. Tote: £5.60; £2.50, £1.10, £11.10. DF: £7.90. Trio: £107.80. CSF: £15.37.

2.10 (3m 1f 110yd ch) 1, Tico Gold (A S Smith, 6-4 fav); 2, The Bird O'Donnell (13-8); 3, Millies Image (20-1). 5 ran. 1½l, dist. P Cheesbrough. Tote: £1.90; £3.90, £1.10. DF: £3.90. CSF: £3.94.

2.40 (2m 3f hdle) 1, Spritzer (F Leahy, 5-1); 2, Take Cover (12-1); 3, Nordic Prince (5-1). Ardrina 5-2 fav. 15 ran. NR: Redwood Lad. 11l, 3½l. J Fitzgerald. Tote: £6.10; £2.60, £2.30, £1.90. DF: £28.00. Trio: £19.00. CSF: £59.25.

3.10 (2m 3f hdle) 1, Yacht Club (C Elliott, 10-11); 2, Jelmaad (9-1); 3, Saymore (4-1 jt-fav). In A Moment 4-1 jt-fav. 14 ran. 1l, 3l. J Eyre. Tote: £12.50; £3.20, £3.90, £4.40. DF: £70.60. Trio: £110.00. CSF: £100.21. Tricast: £402.19.

3.40 (2m 3f ch) 1, Weaver George (M Moloney, 11-8 fav); 2, Tim Soldier (9-4); 3, Twin Falls (5-2). 4 ran. NR: Aljadeer. Shahgram 2l, 25l. W Storey. Tote: £2.70. DF: £2.60. CSF: £4.77.

4.10 (3m 1f 110yd hdle) 1, Tilty (T Eley, 6-4 fav); 2, Soloman Springs (6-1); 3, High Penhowe (7-1). 5 ran. 8l, 11l. A Streeter. Tote: £1.90; £1.50, £1.30. DF: £23.00. CSF: £10.90.

Placepot: £71.60. Quadpot: £34.50.

Taunton

Going: good

1.45 (2m 1f hdle) 1, Easy Listening (J Railton, 14-1); 2, Break The Rules (16-1); 3, Merawang (4-1). Melt The Clouds 5-4 fav. 13 ran. 2l, 4l. N Hawke. Tote: £17.30; £2.30, £3.90, £1.80. DF: £63.50. Trio: £191.30 (part won; pool of £242.60 carried forward to 1.50 at Chepstow today). CSF: £189.25.

2.15 (2m 110yd ch) 1, Indian Jockey (D Walsh, 6-1); 2, Cracking Prospect (5-1); 3, Nordic Valley (7-2). Northern Singer 3-1 fav (ur). 9 ran. 8l, 1l. M Pipe. Tote: £6.40; £2.70, £1.20, £1.70. DF: £40.70. Trio: £41.70. CSF: £31.58. Tricast: £107.76.

2.45 (2m 1f hdle) 1, D'Naan (C Maude, 100-30); 2, Almapa (4-1); 3, Ultimate Smoothie (3-1 fav). 8 ran. 2l, 8l. M Pipe. Tote: £3.00; £1.60, £1.10, £1.70. DF: £9.20. CSF: £18.33. Tricast: £40.05.

3.15 (2m 3f 110yd hdle) 1, Atavistic (T Dascombe, 2-1 fav); 2, Over The Water (33-1); 3, Charlie Parrot (3-1). 10 ran. NR: Uprising. 9l, 3½l. C Popham. Tote: £2.60; £1.10, £3.70, £1.80. DF: £37.70. Trio: £109.30 (part won; pool of £30.81 carried forward to 2.50 at Chepstow today). CSF: £63.93.

3.45 (3m ch) 1, Banntown Bill (D Walsh, 3-1 fav); 2, Mozemo (7-2); 3, Childhay Chocolate (6-1). 7 ran. 11l, 6l. M Pipe. Tote: £3.80; £2.50, £2.60. DF: £10.30. CSF: £13.49.

4.15 (3m 110yd hdle) 1, Maid Equal (G Supple, 2-1); 2, Mr Strong Gale (Evens fav); 3, Tiger Claw (20-1). 7 ran. 1l, 19l. M Pipe. Tote: £3.10; £2.50, £1.10. DF: £2.00. CSF: £4.53.

4.45 (2m 3f 110yd hdle) 1, Millcroft Riviera (P Henley, 7-1); 2, Decyborg (13-2); 3, Miss Foxy (8-1). Mrs Em 10-11 fav (f). 10 ran. 2l, dist. R Alner. Tote: £9.70; £1.70, £1.10, £1.70. DF: £13.70. Trio: £17.40. CSF: £45.93.

Placepot: £43.00. Quadpot: £2.20.

Southwell

Going: standard

1.50 (1m 3f) 1, Head Gardener (T G McLaughlin, 7-2); 2, Love Me Do (8-11 fav); 3, State Of Gold (20-1). 9 ran. ¾l, 18l. N Littmoden. Tote: £7.70; £2.30, £1.10, £2.40. DF: £2.50. Trio: £10.00. CSF: £5.73.

2.20 (7f) 1, Rambo Waltzer (T Siddall, 11-10 fav); 2, Eurolink The Lad (13-2); 3, Sandmoor Denim (7-1). 10 ran. 1l, ½l. D Nicholls. Tote: £2.40; £1.40, £2.30, £1.40. DF: £12.60. Trio: £20.40. CSF: £8.45.

2.50 (6f) 1, Pet Express (L Charnock, 11-8 fav); 2, Master Foley (6-1); 3, Supercharmer (6-1). 8 ran. 3l, 1½l. P Haslam. Tote: £2.20; £1.10, £1.50, £2.70. DF: £8.50. CSF: £10.01. Tricast: £36.91.

3.20 (1m) 1, Sea Spouse (N Adams, 11-1); 2, Roussi (5-1); 3, Captain's Day (7-1). Prolo Prima 6-5 fav. 11 ran. ¾l, ½l. M Blanshard. Tote: £15.00; £3.40, £3.10, £1.10. DF: £23.90. Trio: £145.60. CSF: £63.99. Tricast: £391.13.

3.50 (1m 3f) 1, Calder King (R Lappin, 5-2 jt-fav); 2, Sarawat (5-2 jt-fav); 3, Mytontaine (7-2). 8 ran. 7l, 1l. J Eyre. Tote: £3.30; £2.00, £1.30, £2.00. DF: £8.10. CSF: £8.16.

4.20 (1m 4f) 1, Calendula (G Carter, 7-1); 2, Carol Again (20-1); 3, Sea God (7-1). Qualitair Pride 4-5 fav. 7 ran. NR: Mad Militant. 2l, 1½l. D Morley. Tote: £10.30; £2.10, £4.00. DF: £88.00. CSF: £120.15. Tricast: £942.45.

Placepot: £119.80. Quadpot: £100.80.

RACING NEXT WEEK

MONDAY: Southwell (AW, first race 2.00), Fontwell Park (1.40), Newcastle (1.50).

TUESDAY: Lingfield Park (AW, 1.50), Carlisle (1.40), Warwick (1.30)

WEDNESDAY: Wolverhampton (AW, 1.50), Ascot (BBC, 1.30), Ludlow (1.40)

THURSDAY: Lingfield Park (AW, 1.50), Huntingdon (1.30), Kelso (1.45), Wincanton (1.40)

FRIDAY: Southwell (AW, 2.10), Bangor (1.45), Newbury (1.30), Towcester (1.55).

SATURDAY: Lingfield Park (AW, 2.15), Ayr (1.00), Catterick (1.30), Newbury (BBC, 1.15), Uttoxeter (C4, 1.40)

Flat meetings in bold

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RACING: CHAMPION CHASER CAN THWART BRITISH RAIDERS AT LEOPARDSTOWN

mperial Call to reign supreme

OUR IRISH RACING ORRESPONDENT

significant trials for eltenham Festival take t Leopardstown tomor- ith the highlight being al Call's return to ac- the Hennessy Cognac up.

impressive winner of eltenham Gold Cup last , Imperial Call has nder a cloud for much past two months after g himself after a heavy his only run of this at Punchestown.

ill need to return to his deal with a strong field includes the *British* ls, Jodami, The Grey and Belmont King, and ier main Irish fancies, Gale and Danoli. signs are *encouraging*

row's Hennessy Co- Gold Cup at Leopards- due off at 3.40, *will be* live on BBC2.

mperial Call will be up task, *however.* The ear-old impressed in a urse schooling session the week. As a result, s shortened up in the *hham ante-post market* tness is not expected to roblem tomorrow.

is a sharp horse, a l athlete and I'm satis- hat *Fergie Sutherland* not be running him he is 100 per cent fit," ial Call's jockey, Conor yer, said yesterday.

e fact that he fell at iestown doesn't worry the fences are pretty stiff and *he would have got* with that anywhere O'Dwyer added. "The three miles at Leop- own will suit the likes of y Gale and Jodami more me but, if my horse is I wouldn't be too wor- *bout any of them.*"

rdon Richards is more in lark about the relatively posed The Grey Monk tomorrow will be the itive test of his Gold Cup credentials. "It is a hot race but he has to knock at the door this weekend or else he will not go to the Gold Cup. I have *no doubts about the trip or his* fitness, but I really want some give in the ground," he said.

Similar sentiments are expressed by Paul Nicholls about *Belmont King, who has* not run since early December when he won impressively at Chepstow. But the most intriguing raider is Jodami, revitalised at Haydock last time and now attempting to gain his fourth success in *tomorrow's race.*

Peter Beaumont's daughter, Anthea, said: "Haydock showed he has retained all his enthusiasm and they broke the track record, which shows that he has maintained his speed. Giving 4lb and a head beating to Unguided Missile is good form and we are hoping *he can pull it off.*"

Dorans Pride can confirm his place in the Cheltenham Gold Cup field by beating See More Business in the Scalp Novices' Chase. His trainer, Michael Hourigan, has stubbornly refused to commit his unbeaten novice to the Gold *Cup, although it is Dorans* Pride's only Cheltenham entry. However, if he can confirm his length defeat of See More Business at Fairyhouse in December then Dorans Pride is sure to contract further in the Gold Cup betting.

Nicholls is expecting a big *race from See More Business* and said: "He ran a bit too free and jumped a bit novicey at Fairyhouse, but we were pleased he was able to run all *the way to the line.*"

There should be far less fireworks in the Deloitte and Touche Novices' Hurdle where the Sun Alliance Hurdle favourite, Istabraq, should have a comfortable success en route to Cheltenham.

It says much for Aidan O'Brien's domination of this event that Istabraq's two most likely dangers are stable companions, Finnegans Hollow and *Liss De Paor.*

BARRY BATCHELOR

Imperial Call clears the last on his way to victory over Rough Quest in last season's Cheltenham Gold Cup

TOMORROW'S BIG RACE FIELD

3.40 HENNESSY COGNAC GOLD CUP (£59,000: 3m) (8) BBC2

1 1F5/1 BELMONT KING 57 (CD,S) (Mrs B Bond) P Nicholls (GB) 9-12-0 D Bridgwater 83
2 31-1F1F DANOLI 14 (C,BF,F,G,S) (D O'Neill) T Foley 9-12-0 T Treacy 75
3 22-SU5F IDIOTS VENTURE 10 (G,S) (Blackwater Racing Synd) A P O'Brien 10-12-0 C Swan 55
4 1F11-4 IMPERIAL CALL 57 (CD,BF,G,S) (Lisselan Farms Ltd) F Sutherland 8-12-0 C O'Dwyer 89
5 24-21 JODAMI 15 (CD,F,G,S) (J Yeadon) P Beaumont (GB) 12-12-0 N Williamson 88
6 00-6623 KING OF THE GALES 22 (CD,G,S) (E King) A Moore 10-12-0 C O'Brien 65
7 1P-4421 MERRY GALE 37 (D,BF,G,S) (H Stanley) J Dreaper 9-12-0 R Dunwoody 81
8 1111-12 THE GREY MONK 84 (G,S) (A Duff) G Richards (GB) 9-12-0 A Dobbin 74

BETTING: 11-10 Imperial Call, 7-2 The Grey Monk, 5-1 Jodami, 8-1 Danoli, 10-1 Merry Gale, 12-1 Belmont King, 25-1 Idiots Venture, 66-1 King Of The Gales.

1996: IMPERIAL CALL 7-12-0 C O'Dwyer (4-1) F Sutherland 8 ran

Opponents sleighed by Rudolph's rocket fuel

SIMON BARNES

On Saturday

SPORT is a land of whispers: no one can win a race without starting a thousand rumours about performance-enhancing drugs. And what is true for human athletes is true for reindeer. Yes, they have decided to introduce drug-testing in the great sport of reindeer racing. With the new season starting *next* week, at Rovaniemi in northern Finland, reindeer drivers have been warned that retribution lies ahead for the owners of drugged beasts.

The Finnish Game and Fisheries Research Institute *will carry out random* blood tests on these fine and speedy animals. They will not be able to use urine tests, as they do in horse racing, because reindeer tend to *empty their bladders* the moment they cross the finishing line.

Researchers have been studying normal hormone levels *in reindeer for comparison.* One of these, Mauri Neiminen, said that the sport was filled with stories of hopped-up reindeer, but proof was *lacking.*

Hints have been provided by the premature shedding of antlers, and by sudden and dramatic improvements in performance; interestingly, only one of these is familiar to observers of track and field. I believe a prominent red nose is also considered something of a give-away.

So Rudolph that's why you've got the red nose!

Come off it, sport

Ever wondered where all the loud-mouthed drunks in Australia come from? Well, I have the answer for you — Great Britain. "A lot of yobbos who have been getting onto the field at the Sydney Cricket Ground have been backpackers, often British tourists," Gabrielle Harrison, the New South Wales Minister for Sport, said. "I was disgusted with some of the behaviour."

She plans to pass information on to Scotland Yard so that offenders may be banned from sporting events when they get home. However, it is unclear how many foreign nationals were among those expelled from the ground after the match between Pakistan and West Indies.

At the match in question, there were eight arrests and 90 more people were charged with drunkenness, offensive behaviour, *resisting arrest* and obstructing the view. And, obviously, this is the work of foreigners — why, the very idea of a drunk Australian is offensive to good sense.

☐ *Aurel Rusu is the owner and patron of an amateur football club in Romania. He has just appointed his son as player-president of the club. Lucian Rusu is six months old.*

"I want to make my Lucian a great champion," Rusu père said. "So I thought the first step should be to make him enter the world of football as soon as possible."

Snap decision

Diego update: leaving his home at speed in his Porsche, Diego, accompanied by his agent, Guillermo Coppola (just released from prison after drug-dealing charges against *him were dropped due to lack* of evidence), sent a photographer flying. The soft-hearted Diego stopped and told the stricken man that he ought to see a doctor. He then drove off to have a haircut, and emerged with his forelock dyed blue, *violet* and gold.

Dirty Dennis

Dennis Rodman, bad boy of American basketball, has also been having a go at photographers. He has been found guilty of kicking a courtside photographer in the groin, *suspended for 11 games and* ordered to pay the writhing lensman $200,000 [about £120,000]; he will also lose around $1.5 million in wages.

This being America, every attention-seeker within range of a camera has had a say on the matter. President Clinton issued a statement saying that he wished Rodman *would* grow up. Rodman was so delighted by this attention that he has offered to play some games for free. "I believe I owe that much to the Bulls." And the Rev Jesse Jackson has suggested that Rodman's suspension should be reduced on a civil rights plea. Perhaps the photographer should be arrested for assaulting Rodman's boot with his testicles.

Religious divide

More on sport and religion, and back to the United States, where *they are mad about* both. Shawn Bradley, of the New Jersey Nets, was penalised for using profanity. Bradley's coach, John Calipari, said: "He couldn't have sworn. He's a Mormon." Hue Hollins, the referee, said: "I'm a Baptist, and I don't lie."

Fantus misses screen test

POINT-TO-POINT BY CARL EVANS

EVISED point-to-point- makes its debut at the r Forest *meeting today,* n the Racing Channel dcasts all eight races.

would have been quite a for the programme to w Fantus, *favourite for* eltenham's Foxhunter se, making his seasonal ut, *but the driest January* record means he stays in box. His trainer, Richard ber, walked the course on ursday and praised the *undsmen for producing* od, fast ground", and while star is a non-runner the ble will take eight to the eting. Brackenfield and ll *In Business* represent rber in the mixed open.

In Fantus's absence, the cameras ought to be covering the **Oxford University** meeting, where a Welsh and Scottish National winner makes his debut between the flags.

Run For Free has not won a race *since just getting the* better of Merry Master at Ayr in 1993, but at his best he could carry the Oxford boat race crew and win a point. Some great years with Martin Pipe are behind him and as part of a long-term retirement package *he is taking life at a gentler* pace with Alan and Lawney Hill, who run a livery yard near High Wycombe.

Not many thoroughbreds *like standing in fields at this* time of year and Run For Free is being kept active. Today's assignment is the men's open and if he retains his enthusiasm a hunter chase campaign is possible.

The sport is not only about old horses. Out The Door, *now eight but last season's* champion young horse, runs at the **North Western** meeting tomorrow with Stephanie Baxter at the reins.

TODAY'S MEETINGS: New Forest at Larkhill, 5m NW Amesbury (first race 12.00); North Cornwall at Wadebridge, 1m W of town (12.00); Old Raby at Witton *Castle, 5m W of Bishop Auckland (12.30);* Oxford University at Kingston Blount, 8m NW of High Wycombe (12.00); Thurlow at Horseheath, 3m W of Haverhill (12.00).

TOMORROW: Easton Harriers at Higham, 8m NE of Colchester (12.00); Lincs Club at Market Rasen, on NH course (12.00); North West at Wolverhampton, on NH course (12.00).

WETHERBY

HUNDERER

.10 Namoodaj. 1.40 Chief Minister. 2.10 Purevalue. .40 Down The Fell. 3.15 Celestial Choir. 3.45 Cab n Target. *4.20 Wynyard Knight.*

arl Evans: 3.45 Cab On Target.

OING: GOOD SIS

1.10 DEMMY IN WETHERBY NOVICES HURDLE (£3,240: 2m) (25 runners)

1 1 *QUANGO* 18 (G) J Fitzgerald 5-11-8 A Dobbin
2 -163 TREMENDISTO 14 (D,G) Capt J Wilson 7-11-8 R Guest
3 06 BALLYRANTER 9 M Hammond 6-11-3 D Bentley
4 40 BOLLIN FRANK 12 T Easterby 5-11-3 A S Smith
5 FP- CHOPWELL DRAPES 282 J Howard Johnson 7-11-3 M Moloney
6 0-PP DOUGAL 50 B Rothwell 6-11-3 B Grattan (5)
7 F402 DURANO 9 T Easterby 8-11-3 D Byrne
8 00-6 IRISH BUZZ 53 Mrs A Swinbank 5-11-3 J Supple
9 P MUBARIZ 86 C Smith 5-11-3 M Ranger
10 00 MUDLARK 50 (BF) J Norton 5-11-3 W Fry
11 NEW CENTURY 163F D Nicholls 5-11-3 F Leahy (3)
12 0 ON THE OFF CHANCE 4 L Lungo 5-11-3 N Bentley
13 36-6 PILKINGTON 58 (G) J Howard Johnson 7-11-3 Michael Brennan (5)
14 P0/5 PUBLIC WAY 78 N Chamberlain 7-11-3 Miss C Metcalfe (7)
15 SP0 RUSHEN RAIDER 8 K Hogg 5-11-3 M Foster
16 635- THE ROAD WEST 475 (S) J Eyre 8-11-3 B Storey
17 P ANTARCTICA 11 J Hetherton 5-10-12 D Parker
18 00-P BONNY RIGG 9 L Lungo 5-10-12 T Reed
19 0P PERSIAN SUNSET 61 Miss J Bower 5-10-12 K Gaule
20 ROYAL YORK 506F G Richards 5-10-12 P Carberry
21 120/ SHADOWS OF SILVER 842F (S) Mrs M Reveley 9-10-12 G Cahill
22 35 SOMETHING SPEEDY 38 M Hammond 5-10-12 R Burns (7)
23 3 FOREVER NOBLE 12 M Hammond 4-10-7 R Hodge
24 0F JOE SHAW 42 Mrs M Reveley 4-10-7
25 6 NAMOODAJ 13 (BF) D Nicholson 4-10-7 Mr R Thornton (5)

2-1 Quango, 4-1 Namoodaj, 5-1 New Century, 8-1 Royal York, 10-1 Durano, Forever Noble, 12-1 Something Speedy, 14-1 others.

1.40 DEMMY THE BOOKMAKER NOVICES CHASE (£3,585: 2m 4f 110yd) (6)

1 31F2 GOLDEN HELLO 8 (C,F,G,S) T Easterby 6-11-13 A S Smith
2 1-43 CATTLY HANG 9 (S) J Leigh 7-11-3 A Dobbin
3 60-2 CHIEF MINISTER 12 (F,S) M Hammond 8-11-3 R Garritty
4 16-P COLONEL IN CHIEF 53 (S) G Richards 7-11-3 P Carberry
5 F-PF JUST SUPPOSEN 7 (F) B Rothwell 6-11-3 B Storey
6 00-P WILD GAME 18 Miss S Williamson 6-11-3 A Todd (7)

11-10 Chief Minister, 3-1 Colonel In Chief, 4-1 Golden Hello, 10-1 Cattly Hang, 25-1 Just Supposen, 33-1 Wild Game.

2.10 DEMMY CREDIT HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,861: 2m 7f) (7)

1 F5-6 DISCO DES MOTTES 9 (S) G Richards 6-12-0 P Carberry
2 21-4 TIBETAN 42 (S) Lady Herries 5-12-0 Mr R Thornton (5)
3 4434 SCOTTON BANKS 14 (C,G,S) T Easterby 8-11-12 B Storey
4 -114 JOCKS CROSS 9 (BF,F,G,S) G Richards 6-10-11 A Dobbin
5 143- CAMPAIGN 350 (F) M Hammond 6-10-7 R Garritty
6 1-34 PUREVALUE 7 (C,BF,G,S) M W Easterby 6-10-5 R Guest
7 1F51 SHARE OPTIONS 14 (C,F,G) T Easterby 6-10-0 A S Smith

11-4 Tibetan, 7-2 Share Options, 4-1 Jocks Cross, 6-1 Campaign, 7-1 Disco Des Mottes, 8-1 Scotton Banks, Purevalue.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: Miss C Saunders, 3 winners from 4 runners, 75.0%; D Nicholson, 17 from 56, 30.4%; Mrs M Reveley, 47 from 170, 27.6%; Mrs A Swinbank, 3 from 11, 27.3%; G Richards, 27 from 115, 23.5%.

JOCKEYS: P Carberry, 6 winners from 21 rides, 28.6%; R Guest, 12 from 72, 16.7%; D Byrne, 7 from 42, 16.7%; A Dobbin, 15 from 100, 15.0%; F Leahy, 4 from 32, 12.5%.

2.40 MARSTON MOOR HANDICAP CHASE (£8,183: 2m 4f 110yd) (6)

1 2/35 KADI 13 (D,G,S) D Nicholson 8-11-10 Mr R Thornton (5)
2 11-2 VALIANT WARRIOR 42 (D,F,G,S) M Hammond 9-11-5 R Garritty
3 -411 KONVEKTA KING 14 (F,G,S) O Sherwood 9-11-4 A Dobbie
4 1013 THE LAST FLING 49 (CD,F,G,S) Mrs S Smith 7-10-10 R Guest
5 2134 DOWN THE FELL 14 (D,F,G,S) J Howard Johnson 8-10-9 P Carberry
6 FP/3 IN TRUTH 8 (G,S) S Gollings 9-10-5 K Gaule

2-1 Konvekta King, 3-1 Valiant Warrior, 7-2 Kadi, 5-1 The Last Fling, 7-1 Down The Fell, 14-1 In Truth.

3.15 DEMMY SWITCH HANDICAP HURDLE (£5,586: 2m) (9)

1 1144 TOM BRODIE 14 (CD,F,G,S) J Howard Johnson 7-11-10 A Dobbin
2 P/52 UNCLE DOUG 15 (CD,G,S) Mrs M Reveley 6-11-9 G Cahill
3 1F-F EDELWEIS DU MOULIN 84 (D,BF,S) G Richards 5-11-9 P Carberry
4 F053 THORNTON GATE 15 (CD,F,G,S) T Easterby 8-11-6 A S Smith
5 5430 ELPIDOS 14 (D,F,S) M Hammond 5-10-13 R Garritty
6 13-F CELESTIAL CHOIR 7 (G) J Eyre 7-10-10 B Storey
7 3025 DESERT FIGHTER 7 (CD,F) Mrs M Reveley 6-10-8 M Herrington (7)
8 1-52 HAM N'EGGS 161 (D,BF,F,G) M Hammond 6-10-6 D Bentley
9 0-6F HOLDERS HILL 21F (D,G) M Meagher 5-10-4 D Byrne

3-1 Edelweis Du Moulin, 7-2 Celestial Choir, 4-1 Tom Brodie, 6-1 Uncle Doug, 7-1 Ham N'Eggs, 8-1 Elpidos, Desert Fighter, 10-1 others.

3.45 HAROLD CHARLTON MEMORIAL HUNTER CHASE (Amateurs: £1,193: 3m 1f) (10)

1 141- FORDSTOWN 280F (G,S) J Alexander 8-12-4 J Alexander (7)
2 4214 KUSHBALOO 98 (D,F,G) C Parker 12-12-4 A Parker (7)
3 P03- MATT REID 299 (D,F,G,S) J Leigh 13-12-4 W Morgan (7)
4 114- TEAPLANTER 288 (C,D,F,G,S) Miss C Saunders 14-12-4 B Pollock (5)
5 05-1 SOUTHERN MINSTREL 6P (C,F,G) N Chamberlain 14-12-0 Miss C Metcalfe (7)
6 4P2- CAB ON TARGET 336 (D,F,G,S) Mrs M Reveley 11-11-10 S Swiers
7 0P0- HIGHLANDMAN 340 (G) J Haldane 11-11-10 M Bradburne (7)
8 00P- NO WORD 285 (F) I Baker 10-11-10 I Baker (7)
9 213- PEAJADE 288 (F,G,S) Miss J Wormall 13-11-10 Miss J Wormall (7)
10 206- TOM LOG 298P (F,S) W Burnell 10-11-10 W Burnell (7)

11-10 Cab On Target, 4-1 Kushbaloo, 5-1 Teaplanter, 10-1 Matt Reid, Peajade, 12-1 Southern Minstrel, Fordstown, 25-1 others.

4.20 WEATHERBYS STARS OF-TOMORROW OPEN NATIONAL HUNT FLAT RACE (£1,413: 2m) (16)

1 6 BANKER COUNT 49 M W Easterby 5-11-2 A Dobbin
2 0 BLASTER WATSON 11 C Smith 5-11-2 M Ranger
3 LADY'S PET Miss S Williamson 6-11-2 A Todd (7)
4 2 NOBLE TOM 11 R Collins 5-11-2 P Carberry
5 09 PHAR SMOOTHER 14 J Fitzgerald 5-11-2 W Dwan
6 3 ROMAN OUTLAW 43 M Hammond 5-11-2 R Garritty
7 SHANNON SHOON J Howard Johnson 5-11-2 G F Ryan (5)
8 SPRIGHTLEY PIP Miss C Johnsey 6-11-2 R Guest
9 STAN'S PRIDE Mrs V Aconley 5-11-2 B Storey
10 STRONG MAGIC Miss C Johnsey 5-11-2 D Byrne
11 THUNDERPOINT T Easterby 5-11-2 A S Smith
12 WYNYARD KNIGHT Mrs M Reveley 5-11-2 R Hodge
13 0 OUR CAROL J Parkes 5-10-11 V Smith
14 GENEROUS STREAK J Norton 4-10-6 Mr R Thornton (5)
15 CEEJAYELL N Chamberlain 4-10-1 Miss C Metcalfe (7)
16 COQUETTISH J Hetherton 4-10-1 D Parker

7-2 Noble Tom, 4-1 Wynyard Knight, 5-1 Roman Outlaw, 7-1 Banker Count, Thunderpoint, 8-1 Phar Smoother. 10-1 Shannon Shoon, 12-1 others.

☐ Martin Pipe failed in his attempt to go through a seven-race card at Taunton yesterday but the champion trainer, who sponsored all the events at the meeting, still registered a 363-1 four-timer with Indian Jockey, D'Naan, Banntown Bill and Maid Equal.

STRATFORD

THUNDERER

1.05 Eudipe. 1.35 King Of Camelot. 2.05 Artic Wings. 2.35 Silver Standard. 3.05 Poucher. 3.40 Fontainerouge.

GOING: GOOD SIS

1.05 MERRY HILL SHOPPING CENTRE NOVICES CHASE (£2,876: 2m 1f 110yd) (10 runners)

1 4111 EUDIPE 62 (F,G,S) M Pipe 5-11-11 S Wynne
2 -561 STAGE PLAYER 42 (F,G,S) Miss C Caroe 11-11-6 I Lawrence
3 32-F BLAIR CASTLE 9 (F) G Balding 6-11-2 B Fenton
4 *F/24 CLIFTON GAME 76 M Channon 7-11-2* D Gallagher
5 4303 CURRAGH PETER 7 Mrs P Bickerton 10-11-2 Guy Lewis (3)
6 -4PP KINO'S CROSS 12 (S) A J Wilson 8-11-2 G Hogan (3)
7 6-00 THE SECRET GREY 64 D McCain 6-11-2 T Jenks
8 P/40 WARSPITE 9 P Mooney 7-11-2 S Ryan (5)
9 46-P WIN A HAND 95 B Ryall 7-10-11 —
10 PP0P WOODLANDS ENERGY 16 P Pritchard 6-10-11 R Bellamy

4-5 Eudipe, 7-2 Clifton Game, 5-1 Stage Player, 8-1 Blair Castle, 12-1 Kino's Cross, 16-1 Curragh Peter, 20-1 others.

1.35 EBF NATIONAL HUNT NOVICES HURDLE (Qualifier: £2,253: 2m 110yd) (5)

1 00P- CUMBERLAND YOUTH 313 Miss C Caroe 6-11-0 I Lawrence
2 PP/ ELGINTORUS 644P C Mann 7-11-0 J Magee (3)
3 6-00 FRENO 68 K Bailey 6-11-0 W McFarland
4 1 KING OF CAMELOT 49 (F) D Nicholson 7-11-0 R Massey (3)
5 P260 WINTER ROSE 101 Miss P Whittle 6-11-0 K Hibbert (7)

2-5 King Of Camelot, 5-1 Freno, 8-1 Winter Rose, 12-1 Elgintorus, 25-1 Cumberland Youth.

2.05 AHP TRAILERS WOMBOURNE HANDICAP CHASE (£3,583: 2m 5f 110yd) (10)

1 F-34 *LINDEN'S LOTTO 8 (B,C,F,G,S) J White 8-11-10* S Ryan (5)
2 -3P0 SEOD RIOGA 14 (F,G,S) S Mellor 8-11-5 D Fortt (3)
3 /4-P OVER THE POLE 57 (G) P Cheesbrough 10-11-2 T Jenks
4 31F6 THE CAUMRUE 8 (G,S) G Balding 9-11-0 B Fenton
5 421- ARTIC WINGS 292 (D,F,G,S) O Brennan 9-10-12 M Brennan
6 -12F *MERRY PANTO 58 (F,G) C Brooks 8-10-9* D Gallagher
7 -31U DISTINCTIVE 8 (D,G,S) M Wilkinson 8-10-6 G Hogan (3)
8 -0FP CELTINO 40 (G) T Forster 9-10-6 S Wynne
9 P0-P ROYAL SQUARE 11 (D,F,B,S) N Lampeden 11-10-4 *Mr D Verco*
10 -52P SCOTONI 47 (F,G,S) R O'Sullivan 11-10-4 D O'Sullivan

3-1 Distinctive, 9-2 Artic Wings, 5-1 Linden's Lotto, 7-1 Merry Panto, 8-1 The Caumrue, Over The Pole, 10-1 Seod Rioga, 12-1 others

2.35 HARTSHORNE MOTOR SERVICES LTD (WALSALL) HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,920: 2m 6f 110yd) (3)

1 0F-6 SMITH TOO 8 (F,G) Mrs J Pitman 9-11-12 G Hogan (3)
2 3233 SILVER STANDARD 11 (B,CD,G,S) T Forster 7-11-3 S Wynne
3 3-00 CAMBO 11 (F,G,S) M Banks 11-10-2 D Skyrme

1-2 Silver Standard, 7-2 Smith Too, 9-2 Cambo.

3.05 RICHARDSON'S MERLIN PARK NOVICES CHASE (£2,928: 3m) (8)

1 2460 GEORGE ASHFORD 43 (D,F,G) P Johnson 7-11-10 M Sharratt
2 F-21 POUCHER 60 (S) T Forster 7-11-10 S Wynne
3 FP BIG ARCHIE 53 (F) Mrs A Bowlby 7-11-4 G Hogan (3)
4 00U DOMAINE DE PRON 7 Mrs L Taylor 6-11-4 R Bellamy
5 2 *PARAHANDY 59 G Balding 7-11-4* B Fenton
6 -614 TOP JAVALIN 12 (S) N Hawke 10-11-4 R Greene
7 U530 COLETTE'S CHOICE 12 (S) G Ham 8-10-13 D Fortt (3)
8 64-0 DARA'S COURSE 16 (F) Miss P Whittle 8-10-13 K Hibbert (7)

6-4 Poucher, 3-1 Parahandy, 5-1 Top Javalin, 8-1 George Ashford, Dara's Course, 12-1 Domaine De Pron, 14-1 others.

3.40 STRATFORD-ON-AVON RACECOURSE COMPANY LTD 75TH ANNIVERSARY NOVICES HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,369: 2m 3f) (12)

1 20-0 MILLENIUM LASS 9 Miss M Rowland 9-11-10 Gary Lyons
2 -325 PEDALTOTHEMETAL 5F P Mitchell 5-11-8 D Gallagher
3 25-0 RIVER WYE 112 G Yardley 5-11-7 V Slattery
4 4-04 *FONTAINEROUGE 47 (G) G Balding 7-11-4* B Fenton
5 0-41 LITTLE SHEFFORD 16 (F) M Muggeridge 5-11-3 I Lawrence
6 *3-00 CADES BAY 18 N Twiston-Davies 6-11-2* T Jenks
7 1-23 HIGH POST 226 (BF,G) G Ham 8-11-1 D Fortt (3)
8 3320 LEAP IN THE DARK 14 Miss L Siddall 8-11-0 D Pears
9 52P2 SKRAM 16 (F) R Dickin 4-11-0 D Leahy
10 0010 SAM ROCKETT 8 (F) P Mooney 4-10-9 S Ryan (5)
11 2231 DRAGONMIST 66 (S) D Burchell 7-10-6 D J Burchell
12 -F00 THAT OLD FEELING 10 J White 5-10-4 T J Murphy

4-1 High Post, 5-1 Pedaltothemetal, Little Shefford, 6-1 Fontainerouge, 7-1 Dragonmist, 8-1 Skram, 10-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: C Mann, 3 winners from 11 runners, 27.3%; D Nicholson, 15 from 57, 26.3%; M Pipe, 26 from 100, 26.0%; K Bailey, 14 from 75, 18.7%; R O'Sullivan, 3 from 17, 17.6%.

JOCKEYS: S Wynne, 8 winners from 30 rides, 26.7%; D Fortt, 3 from 12, 25.0%; R Greene, 4 from 23, 17.4%; D O'Sullivan, 4 from 24, 16.7%; I Lawrence, 3 from 28, 10.7%.

Blinkered first time

CHEPSTOW: 2.50 Wide Support. LINGFIELD PARK: 1.30 Mediate. 4.15 Tanyar. SANDOWN PARK: 3.00 Macmorris. STRATFORD: 2.05 Linden's Lotto.

LINGFIELD PARK

THUNDERER

1.30 Our Shadee. 2.00 Hoh Majestic. 2.35 Thick As Thieves. 3.10 Zurs. 3.40 Perilous Plight. 4.15 Wottashambles.

GOING: STANDARD SIS
DRAW: 5F-1M, LOW NUMBERS BEST

1.30 PELLEW APPRENTICES HANDICAP (£2,146: 1m) (9 runners)

1 1-51 RAWI 11 (C,G) Miss G Kelleway 4-10-0 Angela Gallimore (3) 6
2 04-1 HATTA SUNSHINE 9 (CD,G) G L Moore 7-10-0 M Batchelor (5) 4
3 3102 HAWAII STORM 11 (CD,BF,G,S) D [illegible] 9-9-6 Kerry Baker (5) 3
4 *42-5 MEDIATE 23 (V,C,F,G) A Hide 5-9-4* Jo Hannam 8
5 -063 OUR SHADEE 16 (V,C,F,G) K Ivory 7-9-0 Anthony Bond (5) 5
6 000- SPECTACLE JIM 189 (G) B Pearce 8-8-12 G Gallagher (5) 7
7 -001 INTO DEBT 11 (E,C,G) J Poulton 4-8-1 A McCarthy (5) 2
8 0-50 GREEN GOLIGHTLY 15 (BF,F,S) R Flower 6-7-13 G Milligan 1
9 *0-05 MAD ALEX 11 M Haynes 4-7-10* J Fowle (5) 9

5-2 Rawi, 4-1 Hatta Sunshine, 9-2 Hawaii Storm, 5-1 Into Debt, 7-1 Mediate, Our Shadee, 14-1 Mad Alex, 16-1 others

2.00 BLACKWOOD CLAIMING STAKES (£2,739: 5f) (6)

1 -221 KALAR 3 (B,CD,F,G) D Chapman 8-9-9 L Charnock 1
2 -006 IMP EXPRESS 8 (B,D,F,G) G Moore 4-9-7 G Bardwell 4
3 3-22 HOH MAJESTIC 8 (D,F,G) R Thompson 4-9-3 C Teague (3) 3
4 4-24 HEAVENLY MISS 7 (CD,F,G) J Bridger 3-8-8 D Harrison 2
5 5- MA VIELLE POUQUE 145 W G M Turner 3-8-4 T Sprake 5
6 -603 ENCHANTICA 7 J Berry 3-7-10 P Fessey (5) 6

5-4 Kalar, 3-1 Hoh Majestic, 5-1 Enchantica, Ma Vielle Pouque, 10-1 Heavenly Miss, 14-1 Imp Express

2.35 COCHRANE LIMITED STAKES (£2,496: 6f) (9)

1 6-00 BRIGHT PARAGON 7 (C,D,F,G,S) K Ivory 8-9-5 C Scally 6
2 52-0 DARK MENACE 28 (B,D,F) E Wheeler 5-9-5 A Daly (5) 8
3 50-6 IVORY'S GRAB HIRE 7 (B,C,F) K Ivory 4-9-5 D Biggs 7
4 *0-05 LOGIE PERT LAD 18 J Bridger 5-9-5* F Norton 5
5 5-45 SIR TASKER 21 (CD,F,G) J L Harris 9-9-5 D Holland 9
6 00-0 SOUTHERN DOMINION 8 (CD,G) Miss J Craze 5-9-5 S Webster 4
7 0-22 THICK AS THIEVES 22 (D,F,G) R Thompson 5-9-5 *C Teague (3)* 2
8 0656 SUPERLAD 7 (F,G) J Bridger 5-9-2 J Quinn 3
9 /00- VEESEY 291 (E) J Berry 4-9-2 D Harrison 1

7-4 Thick As Thieves, 4-1 Dark Menace, 9-2 Ivory's Grab Hire, 7-1 Sir Tasker, 10-1 Bright Paragon, Southern Dominion, Superlad, 12-1 others

3.10 DICKIE WILLMOTT MAIDEN STAKES (£3,355: 1m) (5)

1 00-0 HAUTE CUISINE 10J R Williams 4-9-0 D Biggs 1
2 40-6 MISKY BAY 9 D Cosgrove 4-9-0 M Rimmer 4
3 RUDOLPHINE 15J B Jones 6-9-0 M Wigham 2
4 234- ZURS 135 Miss G Kelleway 4-9-0 D Holland 5
5 6 *RACHEL'S ROCK 16 G L Moore 4-8-9* S Whitworth 3

4-5 Zurs, 3-1 Misky Bay, 6-1 Rachel's Rock, 7-1 Rudolphine, 10-1 Haute Cuisine.

3.40 JERVIS HANDICAP (£3,371: 7f) (8)

1 11-1 MR NEVERMIND 14 (CD,F,G) G L Moore 7-10-0 S Whitworth 3
2 51-0 SPEEDY CLASSIC 14 (CD,F,G) M Heaton-Ellis 8-10-0 A Clark 2
3 11-8 MR FROSTY 19 (CD,G) W Jarvis 5-9-12 D Holland 5
4 -051 TWIN CREEKS 9 (CD,F,G) V Soane 6-9-9 C Rutter 1
5 2315 KRYSTAL MAX 14 (CD,BF,F,G) J Cullinan 4-9-7 Victoria Appleby (7) 8
6 11-3 *NAUGHTY PISTOL 5 (V,F,G) P Evans 5-8-11* S Sanders 7
7 0-30 JO MAXIMUS 14 (D,F,G) S Dow 5-8-10 A Daly (5) 6
8 80-6 PERILOUS PLIGHT 9 (CD,F,G) Mrs L Stubbs 6-8-8 T Sprake 4

9-4 Mr Nevermind, 3-1 Twin Creeks, 5-1 Naughty Pistol, 6-1 Speedy Classic, 7-1 Mr Frosty, 8-1 Krystal Max, 10-1 others.

4.15 AYLISH FANE-SAUNDERS HANDICAP (£2,804: 1m 5f) (9)

1 0-52 RANDOM KINDNESS 11 R Ingram 4-10-0 J Stack 3
2 11-2 WOTTASHAMBLES 16 (CD,BF,F,G) L Montague Hall 6-9-9 D Holland 4
3 560- CHILDREN'S CHOICE 75J (F,S) W Musson 6-9-8 G Carter 5
4 00-1 CLASSY CHEF 21 (CD,G) J White 4-9-8 C Rutter 1
5 *-424 DANDRA 12 R Akehurst 5-8-9* J Bramhill (5) 8
6 00-2 CHEZ CATALAN 18 (B,D,F,G) R Akehurst 6-8-7 S Sanders 2
7 60-0 ROYAL CIRCUS 9 (CD,F,G) P Webber 8-8-6 D Harrison 9
8 6-36 TANYAR 26 (B) R Hollinshead 5-8-1 J Quinn 6
9 -544 MUSTANG 15 C Thornton 4-7-10 A McCarthy (7) 7

9-4 Random Kindness, 3-1 Wottashambles, 4-1 Classy Chef, 6-1 Dandra, 8-1 Children's Choice, 10-1 Mustang, 12-1 Chez Catalan, 14-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: V Soane, 3 winners from 6 runners, 50.0%; C Thornton, 3 from 10, 30.0%; J Berry, 31 from 149, 20.8%; L Montague Hall, 13 from 63, 20.6%; W Jarvis, 9 from 46, 19.6%; B Jones, 5 from 34, 14.7%.

JOCKEYS: D Holland, 28 winners from 125 rides, 22.4%; G Milligan, 3 from 17, 17.6%; S Whitworth, 35 from 221, 15.8%; C Scally, 6 from 44, 13.6%; M Rimmer, 11 from 88, 12.5%; M Wigham, 14 from 114, 12.3%.

☐ Graham Bradley is to contest the two-day *suspension* he received from the Leicester stewards for careless riding on Wednesday.

FOR THE RECORD

BASKETBALL

BUDWEISER LEAGUE: Leopards 83 Manchester 80.
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (NBA): New Jersey 113 Phoenix 101; Minnesota 92 Dallas 82; Denver 113 Houston 109; Utah 102 Atlanta 96, LA Clippers 100 Vancouver 94; Chicago 111 Sacramento 93

BOWLS

PRESTON: Saga world indoor championship: Singles: Quarter-final: H Duff (Scot) bt A Allcock (Eng) 7-5, 7-4, 5-7, 6-7, 7-4. Pairs: Semi-final: D Robinson and B Morley (Eng) bt I Taylor and S Glasson (Aus) 4-7, 6-7, 7-5, 7-3, 7-5
YETTON TROPHY: Fifth round: Cumbria bt Darlington 73-72; Boston bt St Neots 79-78; County Arts bt Essex County 111-53; Desborough (Maidenhead) bt Tye Green 91-64; Avon Valley bt Sutton 76-70; Egham B bt Mote Park 95-68; Atherley bt Preston (Brighton) 72-70; Teignbridge bt Nailsea 85-61

CRESTA RUN

ST MORITZ: Prince Philip Trophy: 1, Royal Navy 669.65sec; 2, RAF 678.88; 3, Army 700.83. Lord Trenchard Trophy: 1, A Green 163.73, 2, T Lawrence 164.60; 3, W Wieloch 165.90. Auty Speed Cup: 1, Green 53.23. Harland Trophy: 1, G Chisholm 154.96; 2, Lord Wrottesley 157.01. 3, D Stratford 158.21.

CRICKET

TOUR MATCH: Pietermaritzburg: South Africa A 251-6 (50 overs); Indians 94-5 (24.2 overs). Match abandoned due to rain

FOOTBALL

BASS IRISH CUP: Fifth-round replay: *Crumlin* United 4 British Telecom 1
AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Arsenal 2 Bristol City 2
PONTIN'S CENTRAL LEAGUE: Cup: Group three: Tranmere 0 Stoke 1
SPANISH CUP: Fourth round, first leg: Tenerife 0 Real Betis 2; Barcelona 3 Real Madrid 2.

GOLF

PERTH, Australia: Heineken Classic: Qualifiers (Great Britain and Ireland unless stated): 133: P Harrington 70, 63. 135: F Nobilo (NZ) 66, 69. 136: G Turner (NZ) 65, 71. *137: M Campbell (NZ) 69, 68,* M A Martin (Sp) 70, 67; P McGinley 72, 65; P O'Malley (Aus) 68, 69; K Tomori (Japan) 69, 68; W Riley (Aus) 71, 66. 138: J van de Velde (Fr) 69, 69, F Couples (US) 68, 70; R *Allenby (Aus) 70, 68; M Farry (Fr) 72, 66;* D Higgins 71, 67. 139: T Bjorn (Den) 69, 70; P Broadhurst 70, 69; R Chapman 70, 69; W Grady (Aus) 67, 72; E Boult (NZ) 70, 69; D Clarke 70, 69, P Eales 70, 69; M Tunnicliff *67, 72; J Robson 72, 67. 140: P Senior (Aus)* 69, 71; R Gibson (Can) 70, 70; D Carter 71, 69; K Druce (Aus) 71, 69. 141: R Pampling (Aus) 68, 73; D Smail (NZ) 73, 68; C Suneson (Sp) 69, 72; S Tait (Aus) 71, 70; T Elliott (Aus) 69, 72; I Woosnam 72, 69; P Mitchell 72, 69; R Russell 69, 72; P McWhinney (Aus) 70, 71; D Bransdon (Aus) 69, 72. 142: S Cage 69, 73; P Lonard (Aus) 71, 71; C Montgomerie 70, 72; S Appleby (Aus) 73, 69; G Chalmers (Aus) 70, 72; M Goggin (Aus) 72, 70; S Ames (Trin) 69, 73; T *Gogele (Ger) 72, 70. 143: A Coltart 71, 72;* S Leaney (Aus) 72, 71, M Long (NZ) 72, 71; M Roberts 71, 72; A Sherborne 72, 71, W Smith (Aus) 74, 69, D Chopra (Swe) 71, 72; J Daly (US) 70, 73; R Davis (Aus) 71, 72; J *Cooper (Aus) 71, 72. 144: L Stephen (Aus)* 72, 72; J Townsend (US) 74, 70; D Cole (Aus) 73, 71, F Tarnaud (Fr) 77, 67. C Mason 71, 73; S Scahill (NZ) 73, 71; L Westwood 71, 73; E Els (SA) 73, 71. L Persons (Aus) 69, 75; *S Collins (Aus) 69, 75*
PEBBLE BEACH, California: National Pro-am tournament: *Leading* first-round scores (United States unless stated): 65: D Duval, J Parnevik (Swe). 66: B Henninger, W Andrade, T Lehman. 67: M O'Meara, M Brooks, S Kendall, N Faldo (GB), W Wood, P Stankowski, J Furyk, P Mickelson, V Singh (Fiji). Other British scores: 72: A Lyle, H Clark.

ICE HOCKEY

SUPERLEAGUE: Basingstoke Bison 6 Bracknell Bees 9.
TOUR MATCH: Newcastle 1 Japan 1.
NATIONAL LEAGUE (NHL): Florida 3 Boston 1; St Louis 5 Ottawa 2; Montreal 4 Tampa Bay 1; *San Jose 6 Calgary 3;* Vancouver 2 NY Islanders 1 (OT); Los Angeles 5 Hartford 3

RUGBY LEAGUE

TOWNSVILLE, Australia: World nine-a-side tournament: Great Britain 20 Tonga 0; Great Britain 28 South Africa 10; New *Zealand 14 Tonga 4; New Zealand 12* France 10; Australia 24 United States 0; Australia 18 Cook Islands 4; Western Samoa 30 United States 10; Western Samoa 12 Fiji 6; Cook Islands 26 Papua New Guinea 0; South Africa 42 Japan 6; Fiji 22 Papua New Guinea 10; France 28 Japan 0

RUGBY UNION

A international match

England 52 Scotland 17

England A: Tries: Bracken 2, Beal, Adebayo, Greenwood, Luger, Sheasby, Diprose. Conversions: King 3. Penalty goals: King 2. Scotland A: Tries: Lee 2, Peters. *Conversion:* Welsh.
(at Stoop Memorial Ground)

Under-21 international matches

England 35 Scotland 26

England Under-21: Tries: Gustard 2, Harrison, Hitchmough, Lloyd, Long. Con: Sampson. Pen: Harrison. Scotland Under-21: Tries: McLean 2, Bull. Con: Ross. Pens: Ross 2. *Dropped goal: Ross.*
(at Stoop Memorial Ground)

Wales 44 Ireland 16

Wales Under-21: Tries: A Davies, Jarvis, *Morgan, Shorney, T Davies,* Williams, Wyatt. Cons: Jarvis 3. Pen: Jarvis. Ireland Under-21: Tries: Easterby, Farrell. Pens: Farrell 2.
(at Bridgend)

SKIING

SCHLADMING, Austria: Men's World Cup slalom: Leading positions: 1, A Tomba (It) 1min 35.87sec (46.94sec and 48.93sec); 2, T Stangassinger (Austria) 1:36.03; 3, S Amiez (Fr) 1:36.19; 4, T Sykora (Austria) 1:36.23; 5, K Kimura (Japan) 1:36.26, 6, M Eberle (Ger) 1:36.59.

SNOOKER

NEWPORT: Regal Welsh Open: Quarter-final: S Hendry (Scot) bt *T Murphy (N Ire)* 5-3. Semi-final: M King (Eng) bt M Williams *(Wales)* 6-5.

SQUASH

SRA NATIONAL LEAGUE: Group B: Broxbourne 2 *Chichester 3*

SWIMMING

GLASGOW: World Cup short-course meeting (first three and British placings): Men: 50m freestyle: 1, D Kalinovski (Bela) 22.39sec; 2, *S Brown (Jam) 22.43; 3, O* Roukhlevitch (Bela) 22.56, 5, N O'Hare (Ire) 22.77 (Irish record). Disqualified: M Foster. 200m freestyle: 1, M Klim (Aus) 1min 46.62sec, 2, A Clayton 1:47.33; 3, D *Maganas (Gr) 1:48.71; 4, G Meadows* 1:48.87; 6, J Salter 1:50.64, 8, M German 1:53.38. 1,500m freestyle: 1, I Wilson 15:13.82; 2, S Mikhnovets (Bela) 15:25.32. 3, G Orphanides 15:46.79. 4, D Nuttall 15:50.40; 5, *N Wilkams 16:00.58,* 6, S Shand 16:30.47, 7, D McDonnell 17:03.67. 100m breaststroke: 1, J Kruppa (Ger) 59.73; 2, A Goukov (Bela) 1:01.03, 3, M Krawczyk (Pol) 1:01.04, 5, G Brettel *1:02.17; 6, A Ayers 1:02.52. 100m butterfly:* 1, Klim *52.09;* 2, J Hickman 52.34 (European record); 3, F Hieronimus (Ger) 53.40. 50m backstroke: 1, A Radley (Aus) 24.59; 2, M Harris 25.14; 3, N Willey 25.50. 6, *A O'Connor (Ire)* 25.86. *200m backstroke:* 1, N Butacu (Rom) 1:56.50, 2, R Braun (Ger) 1:57.07; 3, A Ruckwood 1:57.71; 6, Harris 2:00.16; 7, S Millis 2:02.96; 8, O'Connor 2:03.95. 200m individual *medley: 1, M Dunn (Aus) 1:59.02,* 2, Kruppa 2:00.18; 3, R van der Zant (Aus) 2:00.75; 7, C Jones 2:06.13, 8, D Wigg 2:06.14. Women: 100m freestyle: 1, K Meissner (Ger) 54.43; 2, S Rolph 54.79; 3, N Chao (China) 55.18; 5, *C* Huddart 55.39. 400m freestyle: 1, N Brown (Aus) 4:08.97. 2, *L Nicholls (Can) 4:13.85; 3, J Craig* 4:15.15; 4, V Horner 4:15.22; 7, J Fawkes 4:17.19. 50m breaststroke: 1, Y Han (China) 30.88 (world record); 2, J King 32.11; 3, T Sloan (Can) 32.37, 8, N Thornley 33.99. 200m breaststroke: 1, *L Lacuste* (Rom) 2:27.26; 2, B Becue (Bel) 2:27.75, 3, *A Poleske (Ger) 2:28.81;* 6, L Hindmarsh 2:31.50; 8, Thornley 2:37.69. 50m butterfly: 1, L Martindale (Barbados) 27.50, 2, S Ryan (Aus) 28.08; 3, S Greenep 28.51; 4, S Massey 28.53; 5, K Hawcroft 28.61, 8, E Mercher 29.35. 200m butterfly: 1, *L Liu* (China) 2:06.85; 2, M Pedder 2:11.33 *(British record): 3, J Degtau (Can) 2:12.76,* 5, L Kelleher (Ire) 2:17.69, 7, T Davies 2:18.79; 8, H Slatter 2:19.09. 100m backstroke: 1, Z Cray 1:01.85, 2, S Price 1:02.19; 3, A Schwartz (Can) 1:02.40; 6, J Deakins 1:03.72; *7, K Jiggins* 1:04.03. 100m individual medley: 1, Rolph 1:01.61; 2, S Herbst (Ger) 1:03.54; 3, Lu Bin (China) 1:03.66; 7, R Corner 1:06.11, 8, D Borland 1:07.43. *400m individual medley: 1, Herbst* 4:38.12, 2, J Meier (Can) 4:42.27, 3, L Porchianelo (It) 4:47.03. 4, S Nesbit 4:47.95; 5, J Swallow 4:50.45, 6 equal, S Slater and C Rund (Ger) 4:53.04.

TENNIS

ZAGREB: Men's tournament: Second *round: G Rusedski (GB) bt J Siemerink* (Holl) 4-6, 6-3, 6-2; A Radulescu (Ger) bt A Voinea (Rom) 7-6, 7-6), H Arazi (Mor) bt D Prinosil (Ger) 7-6, 6-3, T Enqvist (Swe) bt K Alami (Mor) 6-3, 6-0; G Ivanisevic (Cro) bt T Johansson (Swe) 7-6, 6-4; G Etlis (Arg) bt M Rosset (Switz) 6-3, 7-6

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RUGBY UNION

Wales must look to capitalise on Edinburgh festival

By Gerald Davies

THE match between Wales and Ireland in Cardiff this afternoon is very much in the balance. This may sound odd: after all, so much is made in the five nations' championship of the value and influence of playing at home that Wales, it would be supposed, must already have their noses in front. Riding on a wave of emotion and prompted by a sense of nationalism, the advantage of playing at Cardiff Arms Park must surely tip the balance in Wales's favour.

Whatever debate arises over the relative strengths and weaknesses of the teams, the venue remains a significant factor. It is no different today, except that it is the inverse of what one would normally believe to be the point. The past 14 years indicate that Cardiff is no blessed place for Welshmen when the Irish are in town.

Welshmen whisper under their breath that they have to look back to 1983 for their team's last victory against Ireland on their own ground. Were the Welsh and Irish not such good friends, off the field at least, this might have proved a troublesome and tormenting statistic.

More often than not, though, the Irish have reciprocated generously when the encounter has taken place in Dublin.

Yet, for all this time, Ireland have built themselves a fortress in Cardiff, which has prompted Tom Kiernan, the Ireland captain who led the British Lions to South Africa in 1968 and a prominent rugby administrator since, to comment, with a twinkle in his eye, that Ireland ought to play all their games in Wales — they should forget their proposed development at Phoenix Park and consider Cardiff instead as their permanent home. It is all very strange.

FIVE NATIONS' CHAMPIONSHIP

In reality, though, all this ought not to mean very much as it is muscle and fibre, a jink and a kick, upon which results are determined.

Wales returned from Edinburgh two weeks ago with a spring in their heels after their 34-19 victory. The rub of the green for once had favoured them and four tries contributed to a satisfying victory. They played well and they deserved the margin of success, yet there were flaws that could be exploited by a more powerful team.

The lineout was not as productive as it might have been and the scrum was not as potent as it needs to be, yet it was the manner in which they lost control of possession, once having gained it, that should disturb them the most.

Smarting from their fourth consecutive defeat, it is from such lack of control that Ireland could revive their flagging spirits. They will find hope in their opponents' looseness, upon which Corkery, McBride and Miller will thrive.

Since the Ireland three-quarters, where Hickie, 20, wins his first cap, failed to make any impression against France, much will continue to depend on the back row and the half-back pairing of Elwood and Hogan. Elwood was Ireland's only scorer last time out with five penalty goals. Ross Nesdale is another new cap, at hooker, while Jim Staples, who broke his jaw in the match against Australia last November, resumes the captaincy.

If there are limits within which Ireland would be forced to play, Wales have a potential for greater variety. If the ball's capricious bounce favoured Wales's tries, scored by Evans and Arwel Thomas, against Scotland, the other two, by Scott Quinnell and Jenkins, enjoyed the benefit of good passing and support. If Howley threatened and Thomas teased at half back, the rock upon which Wales built their play was based on a solid midfield.

It will not be the same today. Allan Bateman, with whom Scott Gibbs had formed such a fluid understanding, is absent because of injury. Gareth Thomas, who has not looked comfortable on the wing, moves to centre, his favoured position; Dafydd James, a Bridgend centre, comes into the side on the wing; and these readjustments will have an undoubted effect on Wales's play.

This will be a testing match for Wales. There was excitement after Murrayfield. Today is the day when they need to confirm what promise was on display then. The game should go their way, but it is a day on which you could well lose your shirt.

TODAY'S TEAMS AT CARDIFF

WALES		IRELAND
N R Jenkins (Pontypridd)	15	J E Staples (Harlequins)*
I C Evans (Llanelli)	14	D Hickie (St Mary's College)
G Thomas (Bridgend)	13	J C Bell (Northampton)
I S Gibbs (Swansea)	12	M J Field (Malone)
D James (Bridgend)	11	D J Crotty (Garryowen)
A C Thomas (Swansea)	10	E P Elwood (Lansdowne)
R Howley (Cardiff)	9	N A Hogan (Terenure College)
C D Loader (Swansea)	1	N J Popplewell (Newcastle)
J M Humphreys (Cardiff)*	2	R J Nesdale (Newcastle)
D Young (Cardiff)	3	P S Wallace (Saracens)
S M Williams (Neath)	6	D S Corkery (Bristol)
G O Llewellyn (Harlequins)	4	P S Johns (Saracens)
M Rowley (Pontypridd)	5	J W Davidson (London Irish)
C L Charvis (Swansea)	7	W D McBride (Malone)
I S Quinnell (Richmond)	8	E R P Miller (Leicester)

Referee: W J Erickson (Australia) BBC1: 5.0 (highlights) * captain

REPLACEMENTS: 16 J Davies (Cardiff), 17 P John (Pontypridd), 18 K P Jones (Ebbw Vale), 19 J C Quinnell (Richmond), 20 L Mustoe (Cardiff), 21 G R Jenkins (Swansea).

REPLACEMENTS: 16 K P McQuilkin (Lansdowne), 17 D G Humphreys (London Irish), 18 S C McIvor (Garryowen), 19 G M Fulcher (London Irish), 20 P Flavin (Blackrock College), 21 S Byrne (Blackrock College).

Say a prayer for the pint-sized dragon as Arwel bounces back

Andrew Longmore on the Wales stand-off half ready for his next encounter with Ireland

ANDREW REDINGTON / ALLSPORT

Thomas leaves Hastings down and out en route to his try for Wales at Murrayfield

Regardless of nationality or affiliation, a little piece of all of us should pray for the safety and prosperity of Arwel Thomas at the National Stadium, Cardiff, this afternoon.

"If we are looking for one area to attack straightaway," Denis McBride, the Ireland flanker, said, "I think it may be Arwel Thomas." In other words, like last time, we are going to break the little boy in two. There would not be much to either section, if they did.

Thomas is 5ft 8in tall, 10½ stone soaking wet and, because it is one of the eternal beauties of all the best sports that brain can outwit brawn, speed defy size, the village mascot from Trebanos in the Swansea valley carries more than just the hopes of his countrymen on his slender shoulders. Rugby needs little wizards as well as thundering giants. And the British Isles need a good stand-off half.

Nobody has ever actually told Thomas that he should try football or some less brutish pastime, but two of his teachers did once sit him down to explain the facts of rugby life. "I was 14 or 15 and others were being picked for Glamorgan Schools," Thomas said, "but they told me what I could achieve at the game and tried to get me to train properly. It was difficult because I was the small boy and not being recognised."

Thomas played scrum half for the first part of his youth, when the No 10 was the only jersey he wanted to wear. He still says "scrum half" with a disdain usually reserved by half backs for props and hookers.

Eight caps on, Thomas's admirers believe that the heir to the tradition of Dai and Barry and Phil and Jonathan has been found at last. Against Scotland at Murrayfield, Thomas orchestrated a rare glimpse of virtuosity which brought Wales three tries in five minutes, the second by Arwel, who celebrated by carrying the ball almost into the crowd.

The Wales players thought he looked like Forrest Gump, body straight, arms pumping, so "Forrest" he is now. But it was an act of spontaneous joy, a ritual banishing of bad memories, a release of a year-long tension. "I got some stick for not putting the ball down, but I knew what I was doing," Thomas said.

That was more than can be said for his last tilt at the Irish. Trampled unceremoniously by the baying green pack as he stood, waif-like, under a high ball at Lansdowne Road, Thomas emerged dazed and disorientated. He should have gone off. But he stayed, missed penalties and touch kicks, threw wild passes and tested the faith of all those who had clung desperately to the vision of this latest Welsh saviour. Wales lost 30-17.

"He was hurt, really down." Kevin Bowring, the Wales coach, said. "He was hurt by the media response because they had built him up so much. It took a long while for his confidence to come back, but he's a better player now because of what happened."

Yet eyebrows were raised last month when Thomas, who only regained his place against South Africa when Jonathan Davies went down with influenza, was selected ahead of Davies and Neil Jenkins. It is not just Thomas's neck on the line in Cardiff this afternoon.

"We have invested a little in Arwel and he's already paid some of it back," Bowring said. "He's just got a little to work on, but he's still only 22."

Consistency is the one ingredient both men stress — playing not just in patches but to a high standard for every one of the 80 minutes. Thomas, Bowring says, sees so many options, has the ability and imagination to try so many things, he sometimes forgets to do the simple things well.

"He has to play in the present, not think too much about things in advance," he added. "But I wouldn't impose any restrictive game-plans on Arwel, he has to make the choices himself." When Bristol tried to last season, Arwel went back home, to Swansea and his mother's cooking.

There is a nice balance to this Wales side: speed on the wings, weight in the centre, power in the pack. All Arwel has to do is pull the right strings, and be true to himself.

"People say I have a touch of arrogance when I play, but I'm not aware of that. It's just the way I am. I've always had to do unexpected things to make up for my size, I suppose." Or the name, perhaps: Arwel Camber Thomas.

"Camber is my father's middle name and I've been lumbered with it. I suppose it's quite nice. There aren't many Arwel Camber Thomases around anyway." One too many for comfort, the Irish might reckon by tea time.

Flair and forward strength put paid to Scotland

England A 52
Scotland A 17

By Mark Souster

IT MAY have been the inaugural A international between England and Scotland but the match followed a familiar pattern for the Scots, who were overpowered in the forward exchanges and came up against a back division which showed a flair and panache not always associated with England sides, and led by the admirable Will Greenwood.

England outscored Scotland, who were under pressure virtually throughout, by eight tries to three at the Stoop Memorial Ground and, but for lamentable place-kicking by Alex King, who missed five conversions and a penalty, the result would have been more emphatic.

Apart from the injured Alan Tait and George Graham, this was the same Scotland side that scored 56 points against Emerging Wales two weeks ago. However, apart from Andy Nicol, who performed minor miracles behind a beaten pack before retiring injured with a dislocated elbow in the second half, and the lively Derrick Lee, who scored two tries, Scotland had little to offer except stoic defence.

The tone was set by Greenwood who waltzed past Eric Peters for the opening try, converted by King, after 12 minutes and, once England tightened up after a plethora of turnovers early on, they were utterly dominant.

Bracken added another try in the first half and, after the break, they scored virtually at will, the highlights including Luger's sprint in from 50 metres and Greenwood's intuitive reverse pass that created space for Diprose to score.

SCORERS: England A: Tries: Bracken (2), Beal, Adebayo, Greenwood, Luger, Sheasby, Diprose. Conversions: King (3) Penalty goals: King (2) Scotland A: Tries: Lee (2), Peters. Conversion: Welsh.

ENGLAND A: N Beal (Northampton); A Adebayo (Bath), W Greenwood (Leicester, captain), N Greenstock (Wasps), D Luger (Harlequins); A King (Wasps), K Bracken (Saracens); K Yates (Bath), R Cockerill (Leicester), J Mallett (Bath), C Sheasby (Wasps), G Archer (Newcastle), D Sims (Gloucester), N Back (Leicester), A Diprose (Saracens). Luger replaced by J Mallinder (Sale, 55min); Sheasby temporarily replaced by G Allison (Harlequins, 62-70).

SCOTLAND A: D Lee (Watsonians); C Glasgow (Heriot's FP), P Rouse (Dundee HSFP), D Hodge (Watsonians), J Craig (West of Scotland); S Welsh (Hawick), A Nicol (Bath); J Manson (Stirling County), G Bulloch (West of Scotland), P Wright (Melrose), E Peters (Bath), S Campbell (Melrose), S Grimes (Watsonians), M Wallace (Glasgow High/Kelvinside), C Hogg (Melrose, captain). Nicol replaced by I Fairley (Kelso, 4-11 and 66min); Craig replaced by S Lang (Heriot's FP, 40); Wright temporarily replaced by S Ferguson (Peebles, 3-6)

Referee: C Hawke (New Zealand).

Harmony threatens to prevail

By David Hands
Rugby Correspondent

ENGLAND'S leading clubs, which have known so many false dawns in their dispute with the Rugby Football Union (RFU) over the past year, spent yesterday making sure that the agreement that they hope to sign at Twickenham today is the one to which they assented last week.

Late on Thursday, the RFU's full committee approved the formula that both sides hope will take English rugby forward in harmony. It was driven through by John Richardson, the union president, who went into the committee meeting convinced that further prevarication would cause lasting damage.

There is now a prospect that the new company designed to run first and second division rugby will come into being soon and free up valuable RFU resources to foster the wider interests of the game, which have been severely neglected this season. The clubs can also look forward to a share of television revenue, which up to now has been withheld, and can organise their budgets more effectively.

Even so, the RFU has still to negotiate a special general meeting on March 9, which is designed to implement the constitutional recommendations of the report prepared by Sir Pat Lowry but which could yet offer an opportunity to the grass roots to have their say.

Cliff Brittle, the chairman of the RFU executive committee, who opposed the agreement with the clubs, found himself heavily outvoted on Thursday and will spend the weekend considering his position. Brittle still believes that the game at large should be consulted over the agreement, which suggests that he has no confidence in either his fellow officials or committee members, who themselves represent the constituent bodies.

England should try harder to be expansive

Gerald Davies on the statistical evidence which shows that one team stands alone in relying on penalties to achieve success

ENGLAND begin their five nations' championship defence today against Scotland at Twickenham. Having won the title on four occasions in the Nineties, England have consistently been the most powerful team in Europe and carried the accolade of being the best in the northern hemisphere, but their style of play has rarely been free of criticism.

They have gained respect aplenty for their discipline and organisation; admiration, too, for their single-minded desire in accomplishing most of their goals; but they have rarely appealed to the heart. They would have had to let their hair down for that and to take a chance; to accumulate more of the tries that most people felt they had it within them to score.

This is a subjective view, but the analysis undertaken by Corris Thomas, the former international referee, as part of his research fellowship at the University of Wales Institute in Cardiff, argues that, in rugby terms, England have contributed little to the world game.

"While other countries, such as New Zealand, Australia and South Africa, have been seeking to extend the boundaries of the game, in terms of its skill, excitement, attraction and even exhilaration, England's contribution appears to have been minimal," Thomas says from his study, which is lined with video recordings, files and charts covering international matches played over the past 50 years.

"In the three years leading up to the World Cup in 1995, England's record against the seven other original International Rugby Football Board (IRFB) countries was excellent. It was bettered by only one country, Australia, and that only marginally."

However, while being highly successful, England's method of scoring was very different. Penalties were the main scoring weapon, as can be seen in the scoring profiles of each match played outside the World Cup in those three years — and last year as well.

These show that England, although having a marvellous won-lost record (14-6), failed to score a try in exactly half of their 20 matches, where their overall totals were 21 tries and 70 penalty goals. In no fixture more than that against Scotland is the failure to score tries more acute: in the last three meetings, all won by England, they have kicked 18 penalty goals but failed to score a single try.

The reliance on the penalty goal as their main method of scoring becomes more striking when compared with all of the other original IRFB countries. During the three years preceding the 1995 World Cup, England were try-less in more than half their matches (53 per cent). Only Scotland (50 per cent) were anywhere near, whereas Australia stood at 6 per cent, France at 12 and the other leading powers, New Zealand and South Africa, were below 20 per cent.

The same pattern evolved during the World Cup itself, where England's average of 1.8 tries a match again left them bottom of the league in terms of tries scored by the IRFB countries against all opponents. The figures for New Zealand (6.8 tries per match) and Scotland (5.0) are somewhat inflated, as they include 21 tries scored against Japan and 13 against the Ivory Coast respectively.

1993	Result	Tries	Pens
France	W	1	3
Wales	L	0	2
Scotland	W	3	3
Ireland	L	0	1
N Zealand	W	0	4
1994			
Scotland	W	0	5
Ireland	L	0	4
France	W	0	5
Wales	W	2	1
S Africa	W	2	5
S Africa	L	0	3
1995			
Ireland	W	3	1
France	W	3	4
Wales	W	3	2
Scotland	W	0	7
S Africa	L	1	3
1996			
France	L	0	2
Wales	W	2	3
Scotland	W	0	6
Ireland	W	1	6

Even more damning, however, are figures which compare the points scored through tries as a percentage of the total points scored. England come bottom not only of the IRFB teams but of all teams in the competition, trailing behind the likes of Japan, Tonga, Ivory Coast and Romania.

What may be of more concern, and is a matter that is now being addressed by the team management, is that the trend failed to alter in the 1996 five nations' championship. England kicked 17 penalties and scored three tries, while France kicked seven penalties and scored ten tries. Even the other three teams had a better try count, with Wales and Ireland on six each and Scotland on five. Thus only 19 per cent of England's points came from tries. One of the effects of this was that England took up 38 minutes, or the equivalent of one half of a match, in taking shots at goal.

"The results of matches involving England are quite unlike most others at international level in terms of scoring profile," Thomas says. "In the five nations' championship last year, when England played the average number of tries scored was only 1.25, while seven penalties were scored, a ratio of 1:6. For other matches which did not involve England there was an average of 4.2 tries and 3.5 penalties, a ratio of better than 1:1.

"The extraordinary point about these figures is that it bucks the trend of the last 50 years, which indicates that penalties win surprisingly few matches. Despite the dramatic increase in the number of penalties kicked, the fact is that penalties do not win rugby matches."

A total of 114 penalty goals were kicked in the five nations' championship between 1947 and 1956, an average of 1.1 per game, and this had increased dramatically to 447 (average 4.5) in the period from 1987 to 1996. Yet, if all penalties are eliminated from the scores in all 498 five nations' matches since 1947, the result would have been different in only 18 per cent (the raising of the try points, to four in 1971 and five in 1992, made no impact on this).

The last decade shows that, just as in the period 1947-56, the percentage of matches being won by the team scoring more tries remains around 75 per cent. In only 26 matches, or less than 5 per cent, did the team scoring fewer tries win because of kicked penalties.

How does Thomas explain this paradox? "What happens, albeit subconsciously, is that the referees see to it that penalty goals cancel each other out," he says. "In other words, if one team kicks three penalties, their opponents are usually given the opportunity of kicking two or three or four. Given one penalty, the other will get none, one or two.

"This is graphically illustrated by looking at the matches played between Wales and Ireland over the last 25 years where one team kicked three or more penalties. The sequence was: 5-4, 4-3, 3-4, 4-3, 4-3, 3-3, 3-3, 3-3, 3-3, 3-2, 3-2, 3-1, 3-0. In only two matches did one team kick more than one more penalty than the other." This trend was replicated in the 1995 World Cup.

"This cancelling out is the reason why, in the three World Cups, 80 — or 83 per cent — of the 96 matches played were won by the team scoring the most tries, and in the five nations', where results are far closer, the current figure is 75 per cent.

"Penalties simply cancel each other out, the final dramatic example being the last five matches of the 1995 World Cup. Excluding the All Blacks' high-scoring quarter-final and semi-final matches, there were 43 penalties, seven tries and four dropped goals. Surprising as it may seem, despite six times more penalties than tries, not one result would have been different if all penalties had been eliminated. The same team would have won."

This is why Thomas thinks that England's performances are so interesting. On those relatively few occasions when penalties affect the result, England are taking an increasing and exceptional proportion. In only eight (44 per cent) of the last 18 matches against IRFB countries did they score more tries than the opposition. In the ten matches in which they scored the same number or fewer tries they needed penalties to win eight of them.

This does not change the eternal fascination, however, of the five nations' championship. But Jack Rowell and his team may ponder on Thomas's statistics. The desire is there to change the pattern of English play, but, doubtless, when the whistle blows, a win is a win is a win, whichever way it is accomplished.

PERCENTAGE OF MATCHES WON 1993-95

	%
Australia	76
England	73
New Zealand	62
France	56
Scotland	36
Wales	31
South Africa	33
Ireland	29

MATCHES IN WHICH TEAMS FAILED TO SCORE A TRY 1993-95

	%
Australia	6
France	12
New Zealand	15
South Africa	18
Ireland	36
Wales	38
Scotland	50
England	53

[illegible] FIVE NATIONS' CHAMPIONSHIP

Pens kicked		Max	Min	Avge no. per game
1947-56	114	17 (1955)	7 (1948)	1.1
1957-66	131	17 (1960)	10 (1961)	1.3
1967-76	286	44 (1976)	12 (1970)	2.9
1977-86	431	58 (1986)	29 (1980)	4.3
1987-94	447	61 (1994)	31 (1988)	4.5

	Tries
New Zealand	6.8
Scotland	5.0
Ireland	3.2
Australia	3.0
Wales	3.0
France	2.8
S Africa	2.2
England	1.8

	Matches	Points	% tries
Japan	3	55	73
Tonga	3	44	68
W Samoa	4	110	64
N Zealand	6	327	63
Ireland	4	105	62
Argentina	3	69	58
Scotland	4	179	56
Ivory Coast	3	29	52
Italy	3	69	51
Wales	3	89	51
Australia	4	109	50
France	6	184	46
S Africa	6	144	45
Canada	3	45	44
Romania	3	14	36
England	6	158	35

Sampson's switch augurs well

England Under-21 35
Scotland Under-21 26

By Our Sports Staff

PAUL SAMPSON, the Wasps wing, showed his club and the England selectors that he has a bright future at stand-off half with a superb display as the under-21 side struck the first blow of the weekend against Scotland yesterday.

Sampson, who was selected for the England squad last season when still a schoolboy, was switched to stand-off for the game and, with Hitchmough, the impressive Orrell full back, ran the show.

England's six-try victory was not as emphatic as it should have been, though, thanks to a fightback by Scotland in the second half.

Sampson was at the centre of everything, although England failed to capitalise fully on their forward domination in the first half, and relied too heavily on Sampson and Hitchmough, the latter opening England's account with a try in the corner in reply to a dropped goal from Ross.

Gustard, who came on as a replacement for Kay, the injured lock, but played in the back row, was quick to make his mark, sprinting 40 yards from his first scrum. Then, from a set-piece five metres out, he dived over to put England 12-3 ahead.

Lloyd, the Leicester wing, touched down for England's third try just before half-time but, with the score at 17-6, a mistake by Hitchmough allowed Bull to burst through and score.

Ross kicked Scotland to within three points, and Gustard's second try was answered with a score from McLean, the wing. Eventually, England's superiority produced tries for Long, the hooker, and Harrison, the scrum half, though McLean had the last word, sprinting from halfway for his second.

MOTOR RACING: WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP FAVOURITE QUESTIONS SEARCH FOR SAFETY IN FORMULA ONE

Villeneuve craves greater excitement

BY OLIVER HOLT

Villeneuve settles into the new Williams at its launch in Didcot before the grand prix season yesterday. Photograph: Hugh Routledge

JACQUES VILLENEUVE, the pre-season favourite to win the Formula One world drivers' championship this year, lived up to his daredevil reputation yesterday when he said that he might consider quitting the sport because the tracks had been emasculated and the cars were too slow.

The French-Canadian, who took to grand prix racing so effortlessly in his debut season last year, when he finished second in the race for the title to his Williams-Renault team-mate, Damon Hill, said he was looking forward to the "positive pressure" of being expected to win the title this season. However, speaking at the launch of the new Williams FW19 car at the team's former headquarters in Didcot, Oxfordshire, yesterday, Villeneuve, one of the Formula One's few independent-thinking drivers, also criticised developments within the sport that he feels have stripped it of some of its raw thrill.

"As long as Formula One stays where it is, I intend to carry on in it for a while to come," Villeneuve said, "but when you look at all the changes being made, tyre-wise and rule-wise, it is becoming scary to see how low Formula One could go just to make it more spectacular.

"It is a false way of doing things. It would become more of a circus than a sport. It would restrict cars too much and someone who could push the limit further away would not be able to use the advantage any more.

"It already does not feel fast enough to me. It is so much safer than it used to be. In fact, it has gone overboard, safety-wise. We are 20 times safer than we were, with the helmets protected and the changes they have made to the track and the cars that are slower. It is more than safe enough. If someone other than [Ayrton] Senna had died, they would not have cared that much about safety."

Villeneuve, who won the Indianapolis 500 and the IndyCar world series in his second year there, said that his first year in Formula One had been better than his first in the United States, and admitted that he was expecting great things from this season.

"It will be a different kind of pressure this year," he said, "a more positive pressure, something easier to swallow. Last year, a lot of the pressure was from people expecting me to fall flat on my face coming from the States and I had to prove them wrong. This year will be all about proving people right."

Despite the loss of their chief designer, Adrian Newey, who will probably join McLaren if he can free himself from his Williams contract, Williams will start the season as favourites to add another constructors' title to their rich haul.

The prospects of them continuing their recent dominance were also boosted with the confirmation that Renault would continue to supply them with engines at the end of this season, courtesy of their French subsidiary, Mecachrome. Williams will have to pay for the engines rather than being given them free, but the two-year deal will allow them to have another engine manufacturer, probably BMW, in place in 2000.

BOWLS

Duff proves the power of positive thinking

BY DAVID RHYS JONES

TRUE champions have an ability to beat an opponent even when being outplayed and Hugh Duff did exactly that at the Preston Guild Hall yesterday. Though Greg Harlow was in impressive form in their Saga world indoor singles championship semi-final, Duff, the 1988 champion, emerged the winner.

In addition, he did so in a style very different to that he employed when winning the championshhip at the Alexandra Palace nine years ago. That success will be remembered for his uncanny drawing to the jack; now, instead of getting his bowls so close to the little yellow bowl, he relies on a repertoire of attacking shots to convert adverse positions.

After his 5-7, 7-4, 7-4, 7-6 win over Harlow, Duff threw some light on his new gameplan, revealing that he dons headphones and listens to a "positive thinking" tape minutes before taking to the green. Indeed, his retaliation with his third and fourth bowls was nothing if not positive.

Harlow, 28, dominated the opening exchanges and enjoyed the same intimate relationship with the jack that Duff once did. Nevertheless, though comprehensively outplayed, Duff managed to hold Harlow to 5-5, before a double gave the Ely man his first set.

Duff's disruptive tactics continued in the second set and clearly began to sap Harlow's confidence. It was galling for him to play three or four good bowls each end, only to lose the shot or shots when Duff performed a series of unlikely escapes.

"I can't explain what happened," Harlow said. "I just know I was not as consistent in the third and fourth sets as I had been in the first two."

Inevitably, Harlow's decline allowed Duff, who lost to David Gourlay in last year's final, to step in and, with more room to play with, the former champion's drawing to the jack improved. Turning a 4-0 deficit into a 7-4 win in the third set, Duff scored a three to take the lead in the fourth and sealed his place in today's final with a well-taken double.

Results, page 49

IN BRIEF

Graveney is allowed to apply for vacancy

DAVID GRAVENEY was yesterday allowed to enter the race for the vacant post of chairman of selectors after discussions between the Professional Cricketers' Association and the England and Wales Cricket Board.

As general secretary of the association, Graveney has twice been blocked from becoming a candidate because his membership believed there would have been a conflict of interests. But the parties will modify the role of chairman to exclude him from disciplining any of his membership, should he be chosen for the post.

Graveney will be up against a fellow selector, Graham Gooch, who advised the England Management Advisory Committee on November 1 that he would be interested in the post and would retire from playing, if required.

Britain's task

Rugby league: Great Britain need to win two of their matches today against France, Japan and New Zealand, to qualify for the semi-finals of the World Nines in Townsville, Australia. Yesterday they beat Tonga 20-0 and South Africa 28-10.

John Bentley, Iestyn Harris, Barrie-Jon Mather and Stuart Spruce scored the tries against Tonga and two tries by Denis Betts helped Britain to another convincing victory over South Africa.

Rusedski through

Tennis: Greg Rusedski beat Martin Damm, of Germany, 7-5, 6-3 to reach the semi-finals of the Croatian Open in Zagreb yesterday. A break in each set was enough for Britain's No 2.

Cannock hopeful

Hockey: Cannock, with Chris Mayer restored to fitness, should extend their four-point lead in the premier division of the National League when they visit struggling Havant tomorrow.

Ashley's date

Boxing: Crawford Ashley, the light-heavyweight champion of Britain, will meet Roberto Dominguez, of Spain, for the vacant European title in Liverpool on March 1.

ATHLETICS

Gunnell back in buoyant mood

BY DAVID POWELL, ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT

SALLY GUNNELL returns to competition tomorrow in her first race since she left the Atlanta Olympic arena in a wheelchair. She is not alone as a high-achieving Briton making a comeback from injury this weekend. David Grindley, the former British record-holder for 400 metres, is also due to return.

Gunnell, the former Olympic and world 400 metres hurdles champion, considered retirement after Atlanta. "My first thoughts were 'I have had enough, I have had my day,'" she said. However, she was so moved by her visit to Angola last October that it diminished her self-pity, helping to convince her to continue. Two injury-blighted years were nothing, she concluded, compared with the suffering of landmine victims.

Hence, this weekend, Gunnell finds herself back in Stuttgart, scene of her 1993 world title and world record, for an indoor 400 metres. If she can record in the region of 53 seconds, she will be on course to fulfil her aim of running in the world indoor championships in Paris in March.

"My training has gone so well I have surprised myself," Gunnell said. "The feeling is so very different to last year. I just hope it continues." The seriousness of her intentions was evident when she returned this week from training in South Africa and undertook a six-hour round journey to Birmingham just to reacquaint herself with the feeling of running on an indoor track.

Grindley is attempting to regain his place among the elite of British 400 metres running, from where he has been absent since 1993, when he won the European Cup and was British No 1. The route he has mapped towards the 400 metres in the outdoor world championships in Athens is via the 800 metres indoors in Paris.

A former AAA junior indoor 800 metres champion, Grindley will run that distance at the Midlands meeting in Birmingham this weekend. If successful, he is expected to continue on to the BAF trials for Paris.

Josia Thugwane, who became South Africa's first black Olympic champion when he won the marathon in Atlanta, is to run in the Flora London Marathon on April 13. Thugwane's face was scarred by a bullet five months before Atlanta when his pick-up truck was hijacked and he refused to hand over the keys. He overcame facial and back injuries, caused when he jumped from his moving truck, to win the closest marathon in Olympic history.

Driving does not seem best suited to Thugwane's health. On Thursday he became involved in a road-rage argument and spent the night in hospital with cuts and bruises. He is expected to be back training within days.

Thugwane's London opponents will include Antonio Pinto, from Portugal, Steve Moneghetti, from Australia, and the British runners, Paul Evans, Richard Nerurkar and Eamonn Martin.

Thugwane: London entry

GOLF: RYDER CUP CANDIDATES SHOW ENCOURAGING EARLY-SEASON FORM

Spyglass view looking good for Faldo

BY JOHN HOPKINS
GOLF CORRESPONDENT

SEVERIANO Ballesteros, the Europe captain for the Ryder Cup match against the United States in September, must have been cheered yesterday by the news from tournaments in Monterey, California, and Perth, Western Australia, where contenders for places in his team were playing well.

Nick Faldo started with a 67, five under par, and was two strokes behind Jesper Parnevik, of Sweden, and David Duval, who led after the first round of the AT & T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am. Faldo, in a group that included Jack Lemon, the actor, played Spyglass Hill, the most difficult of the three courses over which this tournament is staged.

Because of the wet conditions, competitors were permitted to lift, clean and place their ball after every shot that did not finish on a green, which accounted for the low scoring. "Allowing us to tee it up was right," Faldo said, "but doing that, you can save as many as four shots."

Padraig Harrington, who lies sixteenth in the Ryder Cup points table, took a two-stroke lead in the Heineken Classic at The Vines, near Perth, after setting a course record of 63, nine under par, in the second round.

Harrington, 25, who played in the 1995 Walker Cup team before turning professional, had nine birdies in a round that equalled the lowest of his life.

While Harrington was having a wonderful first season as a professional, Michael Campbell, of New Zealand, plunged from fifth in the 1995 Order of Merit to 120th. He became so dispirited that he deliberately three-putted at one event in order to miss the cut. "I was at the point where I was going to give the game up," Campbell said. He was much happier after a round of 68 at The Vines that lifted him to joint fourth.

Scores, page 49

SNOOKER

King stays calm to reach final

BY PHIL YATES

THE lack of scoring power which failed to trip up Mark Williams when he captured the Regal Welsh Open title 12 months ago, finally caught up with him in the semi-finals of this year's event, at Newport yesterday.

Williams was beaten 6-5 by Mark King, 22, from Romford, who had never previously progressed further than the last 16 of a world ranking tournament in six years as a professional.

With the exception of a break of 61 in the second frame, Williams struggled to find any fluency.

The Welshman led 3-1 but having compiled a promising run of 37 to lead 52-5 in the fifth frame, he missed a simple red, which allowed King to recover and win the frame on the brown.

King, quoted as 200-1 outsider by the bookmakers, William Hill, before he defeated Steve Davis in the first round, levelled at 3-3 with a break of 79 and moved 4-3 ahead by potting the final black in the seventh frame when Williams, with cueing hampered by the close proximity of white to side cushion, missed it to a balk pocket.

Trailing 5-3, Williams did well to remain composed. He carried the match its full distance and led 50-0 in the deciding frame until jawing a tricky red.

With a minimum cheque of £21,000 at stake, not to mention the opportunity of meeting John Parrott or Stephen Hendry in today's best-of-17-frame final, King was entitled, given his shortage of experience, to fall victim to nerves.

Instead, he made a break of 57 and when Williams had the misfortune to go in-off from a safety shot on the brown, King cleared to pink as he joined Brian Morgan and Euan Henderson as the third player ranked outside the top 32 to figure in a final this season.

SNOW REPORTS

	Depth (cm) L	Depth (cm) U	Conditions Piste	Conditions Off/p	Runs to resort	Weather (5pm)	°C	Last snow
AUSTRIA								
Mayrhofen	30	40	fair	varied	closed	fine	-5	21/1
(Pistes hard-packed, Hintertux glacier excellent)								
Obergurgl	40	140	good	varied	good	fine	-1	21/1
(Good skiing continues; some hard or worn patches)								
Söll	15	55	fair	icy	closed	cloud	-1	27/1
(Pistes equipped with snow machines best)								
FRANCE								
Alpe d'Huez	90	250	good	crust	fair	sun	0	20/1
(Conditions still good but some hard or icy patches)								
La Clusaz	40	230	good	hard	icy	sun	0	20/1
(Upper pistes good, lower ones very hard or icy)								
Méribel	50	130	fair	moguls	fair	sun	-4	20/1
(Good snow available but some main runs wearing)								
Val d'Isère	80	215	good	varied	icy	sun	0	21/1
(Some spring snow developing; good high but hard or icy low)								
SWITZERLAND								
C Montana	40	300	good	varied	worn	fine	5	22/1
(Lowest pistes heavy after lunch, others remain good)								
Klosters	20	145	good	varied	fair	sun	0	21/1
(All upper runs skiing well, above 1,900m)								

Source: Ski Club of Great Britain. L - lower slopes; U - upper.

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5 NATIONS CHAMPIONSHIP

HANDICAP BETTING
Scotland with a 14 point start
10/11 England 14/1 Draw Scotland 10/11
Twickenham, Kick-off 3.00pm, Live on BBC TV.

ENGLAND	WINNING MARGIN	SCOTLAND
15/2	1-5 pts	15/2
5/1	6-10 pts	14/1
4/1	11-15 pts	33/1
9/2	16-20 pts	66/1
11/2	21-25 pts	125/1

20/1 Drawn Match

HANDICAP BETTING
Ireland with a 13 point start
10/11 Wales 14/1 Draw Ireland 10/11
The National Stadium, Kick-off 3.00pm, Live on BBC Wales.

WALES	WINNING MARGIN	IRELAND
7/1	1-5 pts	7/1
9/2	6-10 pts	14/1
4/1	11-15 pts	25/1
9/2	16-20 pts	50/1
6/1	21-25 pts	100/1

16/1 Drawn Match

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FOOTBALL 46

Bidding farewell to the game's wandering star

SPORT

RACING 48

Imperial Call up and running for Cheltenham

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 1 1997

Twickenham expects display of style and substance against Scotland

England seeking proof positive

By David Hands, rugby correspondent

THE starring roles in English rugby union have been occupied so frequently this season by the sport's administrators that it will be a relief to everyone when the players take over today. Phil de Glanville, who leads England against Scotland at Twickenham, has demanded a positive five nations' championship for the benefit of northern hemisphere rugby and now is his opportunity to show that England can contribute handsomely to it.

Having sat out the first weekend of the championship, England are champing at the bit to begin their defence of the five nations' trophy and to demonstrate to their critics that the halting steps forward taken before Christmas are lengthening into a confident stride.

Indeed, for anyone who has cared to look, improvements were perceptible in the three pre-Christmas games, even if the modest showing against Argentina in December tended to obscure them. But it is important that further evidence is displayed today, both for the short-term development of this English team and to burnish the game's image, which has taken something of a battering in recent times.

The England players, of course, are well aware that contractual arrangements have yet to be confirmed with the Rugby Football Union and they are optimistic that those will be in place within the next fortnight. Ironically, this is not a problem which still affects Scotland who, this week, brought to 50 the number of players contracted directly to the union, though that did little enough to assist their cause in their disappointing championship display against Wales a fortnight ago.

But there has been a breath of spring on the game's playing side, even in the depths of winter, which the Twickenham crowd will hope can be reproduced even within the inhibiting confines of the championship. Even, dare one say, within the inhibiting confines of the Anglo-Scottish series, which has tended towards the ordinary in terms of quality far too frequently.

The Save and Prosper international is the 114th in the series and England, who have held the Calcutta Cup since 1991, have not achieved a try since 1993, when Tony Underwood crossed in what was something of a try-fest for the family. Coincidentally, the younger Underwood returns to the five nations today after a season away, though his features may be masked by an unfamiliar scrum cap to protect a forehead still stitched after a stray stud caught him in Newcastle's Pilkington Cup match against London Scottish last weekend.

It is England's fervent hope that Underwood's talents, and those of Jon Sleightholme and Tim Stimpson, can be regularly employed against a Scotland team which, in some respects, looks improved from that beaten 34-19 by Wales, but may prove fallible in others. It is many years, for example, since Jason Leonard, who has won 51 caps, faced a front row of which he knew so little. Tom Smith makes his debut at loose-head for Scotland and his colleagues, Graham Ellis and Mattie Stewart, boast three caps between them.

Smith and Stewart are said to be potent operators in the loose but the set-pieces remain vital to success. "It's still a war of attrition." Leonard said and, given that England's front five has been the most consistent element of this season so far, Scotland may struggle at scrum and lineout. Even so it will be a relief for England if the two Leicester forwards, Graham Rowntree and Martin Johnson, demonstrate that they have put their problems of last week behind them.

The two were severely mauled by Brive in the Heineken Cup final and de Glanville admitted his concern: "They were bound to be depressed afterwards but they have bounced right back into it," he said. "You have to raise yourself for big games every week now, that's the reality of the professional game."

But the area most likely to determine the outcome will be the back row. England's new loose trio needs time to bed down but should be working off a solid platform; Scotland's has a familiar ring to it but the fitness of Ian Smith must be called into question. Smith and Gloucester, his club, have been at odds for most of this season and the flanker has played only a handful of first XV games.

He has been whisked back into the side after a thumb injury, both for his ability to follow Gregor Townsend and his influential decision-making, but the whole Scotland pack will need to galvanise themselves for Townsend to exert the magic he undoubtedly possesses in hands and feet. England will have identified him and the fluent Bryan Redpath as potential sources of danger and will seek to eliminate them.

The Melrose scrum half was the key component of Scotland's assault upon the championship last season and his restoration ahead of Gary Armstrong may be overdue.

England's primary objective, coming late into a championship from which they were threatened with expulsion only a few months ago, must be to win — the style, on which so many words have been expended, can come later. Style is not a quality which can be turned on and off; it derives from individual and collective confidence and, most of all, from the success which should crown England's efforts today.

☐ Will Carling, who plays at Twickenham today, said yesterday that he would probably turn down any invitation to tour South Africa with the British Isles this summer.

Wales well-armed, page 50
Trying times, page 50

FIVE NATIONS' CHAMPIONSHIP

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
France	1	1	0	0	32	15	2
Wales	1	1	0	0	34	19	2
Scotland	1	0	0	1	19	34	0
Ireland	1	0	0	1	15	32	0
England	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

RESULTS: Scotland 19 Wales 34; Ireland 15 France 32

MATCHES TO COME: Today: England v Scotland, Wales v Ireland. February 15: Ireland v England, France v Wales. March 1: England v France, Scotland v Ireland. March 15: France v Scotland, Wales v England

TODAY'S TEAMS AT TWICKENHAM

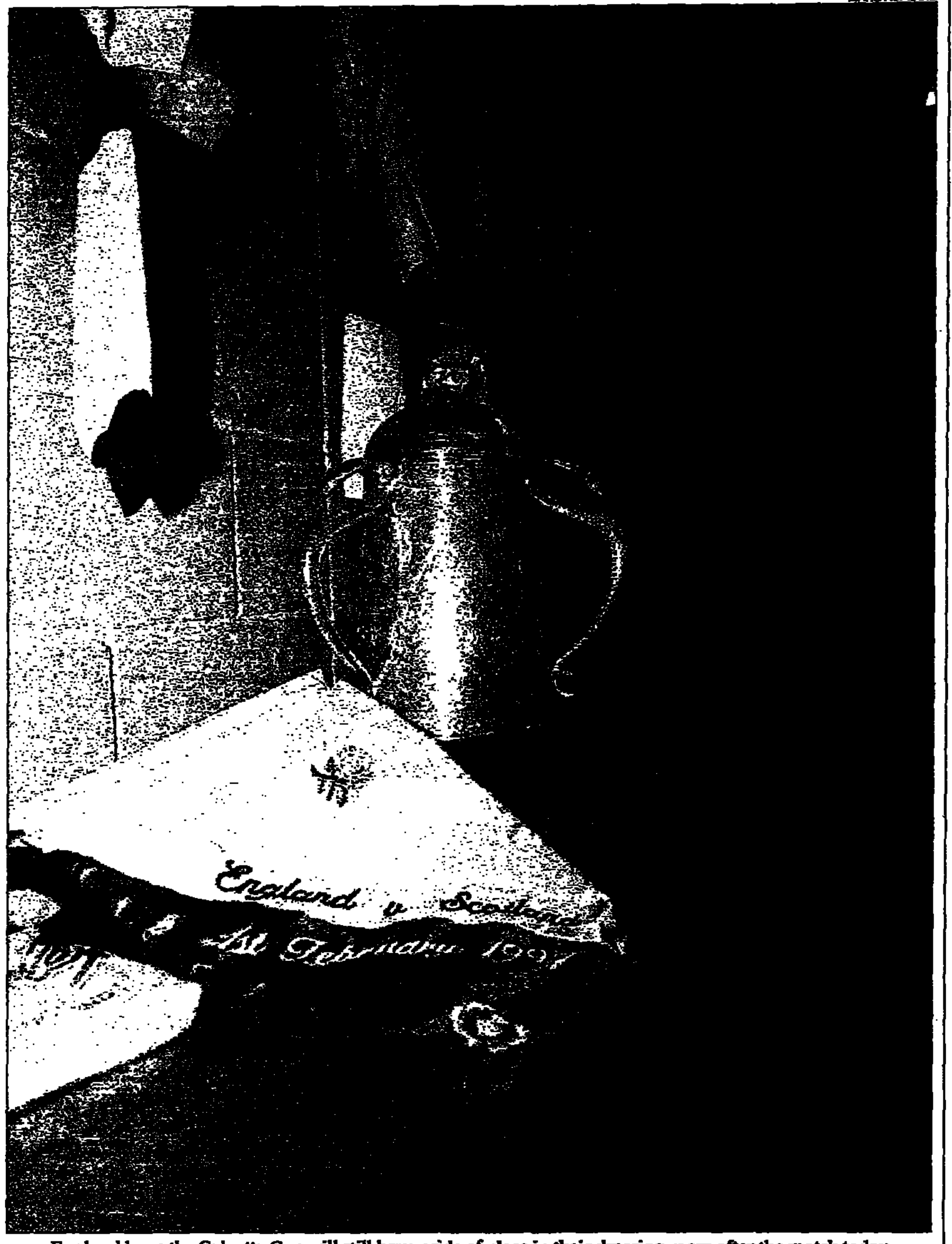
ENGLAND		SCOTLAND
T R G Stimpson (Newcastle)	15	R J S Shepherd (Melrose)
J M Sleightholme (Bath)	14	D A Stark (Melrose)
W D C Carling (Harlequins)	13	A G Stanger (Hawick)
P R de Glanville (Bath)*	12	B R S Eriksson (L Scottish)
T Underwood (Newcastle)	11	K M Logan (Stirling County)
P J Grayson (Northampton)	10	G P J Townsend (North'ton)
A C T Gomarsall ((Wasps)	9	B W Redpath (Melrose)
G C Rowntree (Leicester)	1	T J Smith (Watsonians)
M P Regan (Bristol)	2	D G Ellis (Currie)
J Leonard (Harlequins)	3	M J Stewart (Northampton)
L B N Dallaglio (Wasps)	6	P Walton (Newcastle)
M O Johnson (Leicester)	4	G W Weir (Newcastle)
S D Shaw (Bristol)	5	A I Reed (Wasps)
R A Hill (Saracens)	7	I R Smith (Gloucester)
T A K Rodber (Northampton/Army)	8	R I Wainwright (Watsonians)*

Referee: P O'Brien (N Zealand) BBC1: 2.25 (live) * captain

REPLACEMENTS: 16 J C Guscott (Bath), 17 M J Catt (Bath), 18 A Healey (Leicester), 19 B B Clarke (Richmond), 20 D J Garforth (Leicester), 21 P B T Greening (Gloucester).

REPLACEMENTS: 16 S Hastings (Watsonians), 17 C M Chalmers (Melrose), 18 G Armstrong (Newcastle), 19 D S Munro (Glasgow High/Kelvinside), 20 D I W Hilton (Bath), 21 S J Brotherstone (Melrose)

MARC ASPLAND



England hope the Calcutta Cup will still have pride of place in their dressing-room after the match today

Blackburn shrug off thoughts of Eriksson's Italian job

By David Maddock and Peter Ball

IT SEEMS that barely a week goes by without another denial from Blackburn Rovers Football Club. This time it is over Sven Goran Eriksson, the manager elect, whom initially they denied was joining them. Now the suggestion, from Italy, is that he will not be going there after all.

Eriksson, under contract to Sampdoria until the end of the season, is wanted by Lazio, even though he has already signed a contract to join Blackburn on July 1. Yesterday Robert Coar, the club chairman, moved swiftly to reject the idea that Eriksson would break his contract.

Reports from Italy suggested that Lazio had persuaded Eriksson to ask for his release by Blackburn, but, despite an obvious interest from Lazio, Coar countered: "It is absolute rubbish. The simple fact is that we have a written agreement with Sven that he will join us in July, and he will stick to that agreement. He has no opt-out clauses, no release clauses."

Manchester United go into action today, leading the FA Carling Premiership for the first time since September. Arsenal, in second place, are away to Leeds United with the praise of their rivals ringing in their ears.

Yesterday Alex Ferguson and George Graham, the managers of the two Uniteds, singled out Arsenal as the team to watch. "They have a lot of quality players, and they don't have many weak points," Graham said. "Without question they are one of the fancied teams for the Premiership. I think they have every chance of winning it."

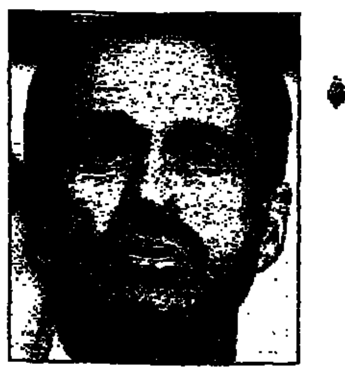
With his own team leading the field, Ferguson was understandably more cautious, but he suggested that Arsenal had a real advantage. "They have the easiest programme," he said. "Up to a point, they have it in their own hands."

Leeds face Arsenal twice in the next four days, having been drawn to play them at Highbury in the fourth round of the FA Cup on Tuesday. In October Arsenal provided Graham with an uncomfortable return to Highbury, winning 3-0. They may expect to find it harder this time, but whether Leeds are yet in a position to extend them fully is questionable.

Manchester United meet Southampton, who embarrassed them 6-3 on that same October day, but United are running into form while Southampton are licking their wounds after the Coca-Cola Cup quarter-final defeat by Stockport on Wednesday.

Ferguson disclaimed any interest in revenge but, with visits to Highbury, Stamford Bridge and Anfield to come, the need to win matches like this is paramount.

Rob Hughes 46
Premiership guide 47



Graham: favours Arsenal

New Zealand make their pitch for Wellington

From Alan Lee
cricket correspondent
in Wanganui

WANGANUI (second day of four): New Zealand A, with six second-innings wickets in hand, are 261 runs ahead of England XI

SHORTLY before lunch-time here yesterday, news came through that the Wellington groundsman had offered his predictions for the Test pitch next week. He spoke of pace and bounce, of batsmen having to protect their heads and wicketkeepers having to practise their agility. It was not, at that moment, quite what England wished to hear.

There was pace and bounce, not all of it trustworthy, in the pitch at Victoria Park, too, and the England XI's batting was rapidly disintegrating on it. By lunch-time they were all out for 107, the indignity exacerbated by the boost that it provided for the Test selection prospects of two fast bowlers.

England's day, and consequently their mood, was not destined to improve. Indeed, after two sessions in the field had seen their deficit swell to intimidating proportions as Llorne Howell supervised an unbroken fifth-wicket stand of 86, it was hard to believe that this largely inconsequential fixture had not damaged the confidence that they will require in Wellington.

These games may not inspire or motivate at an advanced stage of a tour, but days as dire as this can create a dangerous sense of drudgery. "It won't do much for their spirits," Steve Rixon, the New Zealand coach, said with relish.

New Zealand are to announce today their party for the Test and, after each took four cheap English wickets here, either Geoff Allott or Heath Davis is likely to feature. Just possibly, both will be picked, for they offered an aggression evident in none of the home seam bowlers in Auckland.

Neither is new to Test cricket. Allott, a left-armer, played twice against Zimbabwe a year ago. Davis made an inauspicious Test debut at Trent Bridge in 1994. His only victim was Alec Stewart and he has not been chosen since. Yesterday, on a surface that the England batsmen appeared to resent rather more than the opposition, Davis took three wickets in 12 balls to leave the touring team on 57 for seven. One of his wickets came from a vagary of the pitch, the others from disconcerting pace. Davis, at least, would have found the word from Wellington encouraging.

Warwick Sisson is the groundsman at the Basin Reserve and, six days before the Test, he was surprisingly emphatic. "I would definitely bowl first if I won the toss," he said. "You would expect to have three or four down by lunch on the first day. If I see the opening batsmen having to pull their heads out of the way of rising balls and the wicketkeeper taking the ball in front of his face, I will be happy."

Whether the feeling will be shared by England seems doubtful, for not only did they bat subserviently here, they also then bowled as if they were on an entirely different, more placid, pitch. It was difficult to decide which aspect of their second-day cricket was the more depressing.

John Emburey, the tour bowling coach, made a valiant attempt to explain the disparity, suggesting that the greater pace of the two New Zealanders was ideally suited to the pitch. This was true enough, but it was not entirely reassuring, especially if Sisson's word is to be believed.

Even Chris Silverwood, so impressive on Thursday, was caught up in the general malaise. His first-innings figures were six for 44 in 20 overs, but yesterday he conceded as many runs, without threatening a wicket, inside eight overs. He was mercifully rested after being struck for 25 runs from nine balls and, churning with self-disgust at his loss of control, slammed his cap to the ground as he retired to the outfield.

The most combative English batting came from Ronnie Irani, whose muscular 40 averted a complete rout, and he then bowled a serviceable spell to claim the wicket of Craig Spearman. Irani, however, has suffered such an unproductive tour that he is scarcely under consideration for the Test team.

Jack Russell is not under consideration at all — indeed, he has been so marginalised on tour that he could be excused for contemplating a change of career. The thought gathered weight yesterday when a New Zealand sporting newspaper headlined its front page with "I want to be a jumps jockey" alongside a photograph of Russell sitting astride a chair, waving a whip. It was that kind of day.

SCOREBOARD FROM WANGANUI

NEW ZEALAND A: First Innings 181 (M J Horne 64; C E W Silverwood 6 for 44)

Second Innings

*D J Murray b Caddick	12
C M Spearman c Knight b Irani	47
B Chandler c Atherton b Croft	31
M J Horne lbw b Tufnell	8
C Z Harris not out	31
L G Howell not out	51
Extras (b 2, lb 4, nb 1)	7
Total (4 wkts)	187

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-28, 2-84, 3-101, 4-101.

BOWLING: Silverwood 11-1-53-0; Caddick 9-2-22-1; Tufnell 14-4-37-1; Croft 19-4-38-1; Irani 6-1-11-1; White 4-0-20-0

ENGLAND XI: First Innings

N V Knight c Chandler b Allott	11
*M A Atherton c Mills b Davis	5
N Hussain c Harris b Davis	14
J P Crawley c Murray b Allott	5
C White c Chandler b Allott	7
R C Irani c Chandler b Allott	40
R D B Croft c Horne b Davis	2
†R C Russell c Harris b Davis	0
A R Caddick c and b Wiseman	6
C E W Silverwood c Chandler b Wiseman	11
P C R Tufnell not out	0
Extras (lb 5, nb 1)	6
Total	107

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-16, 2-17, 3-23, 4-30, 5-51, 6-57, 7-57, 8-79, 9-107.

BOWLING: Allott 15.3-6-44-4; Davis 14-8-22-4; Kennedy 7-2-23-0; Wiseman 8-2-13-2.

Umpires: B Bowden and E Watkin.

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SATURDAY FEBRUARY 1 1997

Women on the verge

We know all about the male mid-life crisis — that racy, glamorous, escapist thing. But why should women miss out on the fun, asks **Ginny Dougary**

On turning 40 recently, I found myself turning into Martin Amis. This was nothing to do with a perfect set of American teeth. Nor, sadly, a fabulous Archeresque advance for a new novel. It was the panicky sense of wanting to trade in an old life for a new one. If I'd been a man, I might well have done a bunk — or, at the very least, bought a medallion and dyed my chest hair. Being a woman, of course, I did nothing at all.

There was a time when it was an exclusively female terrain of hot flushes and cold sweats, bad temper and loss of libido, and aching joints and thinning bones; a disagreeable, hormonal fact of later life. But somewhere along the line men have nicked our menopause and transformed it into this racy, *irresponsible*, red-Ferrari thing. They have not only appropriated our territory but they have given it a new name: the mid-life crisis. And this crisis, if we believe the mythology of films and books, hits men a decade earlier than it does women, at 40.

There is the temptation, when one experiences something troubling for the first time, to look for signs and clues to indicate that your feelings, far from being unique, spring out of some universal well. It is always comforting to find an echo of your own predicament in other people's. But Trouble at Forty, until recently, has not been a woman's story. Is the female mid-life crisis — a state of mind, rather than something which happens to your body — a new taboo? Is there something so profoundly disquieting about questioning the edifice of your life — in my case, one which is held up by the twin beams of career and parenthood — that it is too dangerous or unseemly to scrutinise the cracks in its framework?

This is a time when many women of my generation, even more I would suggest than men, can be swamped by life's demands. Our elderly parents, with fading powers and health, can be as needy of our attention as our children. And in the most egalitarian relationships, it is often the women who oversee the care of their men's elderly relations, reverting to the traditional role of nurturer, as well as their own. Hurtling between the office and home, the school run at one end of the day, the hospital visit at the other, is pressure-cooker living.

It is hardly surprising that women — like men — sometimes feel the need to explode, to escape, recreate themselves, do something supremely selfish, have an adventure, have a mid-life crisis. Like a greedy magpie, I steal other women's stories in the hope that the vicarious pleasure of reading about their explorations will somehow satisfy my own cravings. But, of course, it merely fuels them. I dream of Herculean journeys to remote, majestic places; travelling on my own, facing emotional and physical challenges, sloughing off an old layer of skin for a new, unjaded one. I long for the clean, white oblivion of Antarctica, "a space of the imagination", as the travel writer Sara Wheeler puts it in her new book, *Terra Incognita*, with "no cities, no bank managers, no pram in the hall". To shed all responsibilities and commitments and climb the Himalayas, to be dirty and cold and furiously, invigoratingly alive.

The heroine of Anne Tyler's most recent novel, *Ladder of Years*, is a 40-year-old woman who takes a walk on a beach during a family holiday and keeps on walking — out of a life in which she feels invisible and into a new one. She is in mourning for her girlhood, as one reviewer put it, which she has never quite outgrown — and for her children who have outgrown her. A similar theme is pursued in *Casting Off*, Libby Purves's first novel, whose heroine, "wife and mother and pillar of the community", abandons ship, so to speak, by sailing away solo into the deep blue unknown. Rosie Thomas's two most recent books were about women running away from the mundane to embrace fresh challenges.

Novels are a form of escapism, as much for the author as the reader, but if they are any good at all they are also anti-escapist: nudging one to confront the dilemmas and disatisfactions of the human condition which one might find more cosy to ignore.

Rosie Thomas, deciding that her heroines were trying to tell her something, *did* do a bunk (with the agreement of her supportive family) and took off for a year to conquer Mount Everest, leap off a helicopter, James Bond-like, on a pair of skis in the hushed wilderness of British Columbia, and go scuba-diving off the Cayman Islands. I read about her adventures with the usual mixture of "good-on-you-girl" glee and "lucky bugger" envy. (Not many women could afford such extravagant forms of escape.)

But I noticed, buried among the tales of fear and exhilaration and derring-do, these quitter, revealing lines: "After 20 years, I did yearn for a space or time or experience that was just for me. I can't speak for anyone else, but I suspect the same is true for most of my friends and many thousands of other wives and mothers."

It struck me immediately as odd that the novelist didn't *know* how her close friends felt: that she only suspected they shared her need to break away and redefine themselves.

Most female buddies are never happier than when they are picking over and analysing the minutiae of each other's lives — and my circle of friends is no exception. But I realised that, like Rosie Thomas whose

Continued on page 2

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SERIOUS SHOPPING MEN'S SWIMWEAR

BY PHILIP DELVES BROUGHTON

Choosing a pair of swimming trunks is one of those decisions that reveals so much of a man's taste: it makes him feel emotionally naked. Trunks are about stripping off, bare chests, preening around a pool. If you think a man is a narcissist on the basis of his designer suit, he will seem many times more vain if he wears over-elaborate swimwear.

Sports shops present an overwhelming array of options. Designers even have swimwear ranges for men. The idea of a "range" of trunks to choose from is nosebleed stuff.

Women can hedge their bets by having several swimming costumes. A jazzy all-in-one for swimming lengths, a bikini for sun lounging, and perhaps a suede Gucci two-piece for never getting wet, flouncing around changing CDs and fetching Philip Morris Ultras. Catch a man with more than one pair of trunks in his wardrobe, however, and he is instantly suspect. Possibly French. He will be the sort who prefers to show off his swallow dive rather than bomb into the middle of a pool. He will do 50 lengths before breakfast rather than spend the day playing *Jaws* with a Lilo. He will find his soulmates in the Mediterranean, where they parade up and down beaches in tight red trunks, Donald Duck T-shirts, swinging their handbags towards the pedalos.

Climatic difference has much to do with the British man's fear of trunks. Unless you are a regular user of health clubs or municipal baths, trunks are to be dusted off once or twice a year for foreign holidays. The British are not Brazilians or Australians who pull on trunks and T-shirts as we might a string vest.

This branch of climato-cultural theory, however, does not account for those Germans and Geordies who favour the crotch-clinging posing pouch. It is unfortunate for Speedo, a company which makes a whole array of doubtless comfortable, stylish sportswear, that it should have given its name to this agonising article.

Speedos are for the professional rather than the gentleman amateur. They are for men who shave their chests for speed in the water in Olympic competition. To wear a pair of Speedos then belly flop into the pool is like turning up for a game of tennis in the full Pete Sampras collection only to double-fault all your service games and whack your own head when attempting a smash. Only worse. In a pair of Speedos, your tackle is snugly contoured for universal perusal. It is a relief, then, to turn to the more popular styles of swimming shorts.

Argument for these ranges over how long the shorts should be: mid-thigh, just above the knee or over the knee. Over the knee and you not only end up looking excessively body-shy but the sheer weight of the water-logged trunks becomes a nuisance. Dive into the pool in long trunks and you risk them bobbing to the surface several metres behind you.

Just-above-the-knee shorts have their advocates. These are usually fat men, often prep school headmasters with unusual sporting facility. Their trunks are from the Stanley Matthews era and are as useful for cooking a barbecue or bowling googlies in the Old Boys match as for swimming in.

Which leaves the mid-thigh model, easily the most popular trunks of the modern era. Mid thigh means mid to lower thigh rather than mid to upper. My own are plain green and have a large Swoosh emblem on the right buttock. They are made of some synthetic material which dries quickly, though friends swear by cotton. Inside is that white netting which keeps everything in place.

They replaced a pair of light blue knee-grazers, bought some years ago for under $10 in a Florida supermarket, which had orange crocodiles crawling all over them. Though these lasted for several years, they were definitely in that sub-category of emergency trunks grabbed at airports, or beach shops from inbetween inflatable Cadillacs and dusty Swing Tennis sets. However ugly these emergency trunks are though, they are preferable to swimming in boxer shorts, which not only turn swiftly transparent but, with their open fly, leave every opportunity for unintended exhibitionism until small children start to scream.

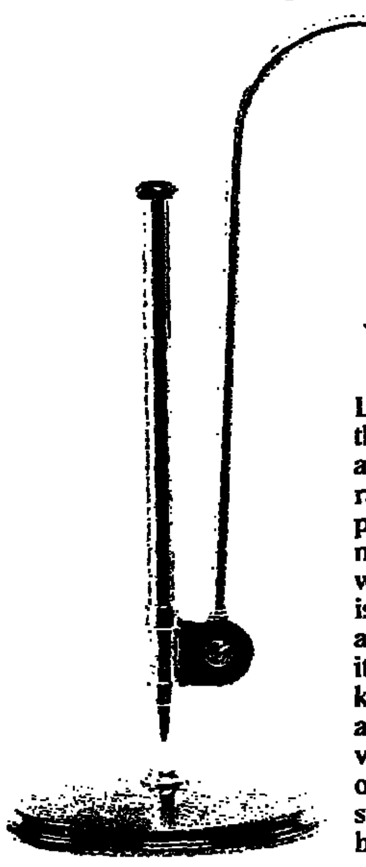
In times past, ancients in need of a swim would either strip off completely or just hoick up their loincloths and wade in. Bathing costumes emerged to protect Victorian modesty, with broad stripes and flannel stretching from shoulder straps to knee under the bristle of an imperial moustache.

The choice these days can be daunting, and the risks high unless one abides by a few simple rules: play it safe, play it smart and avoid anything that resembles women's underwear.

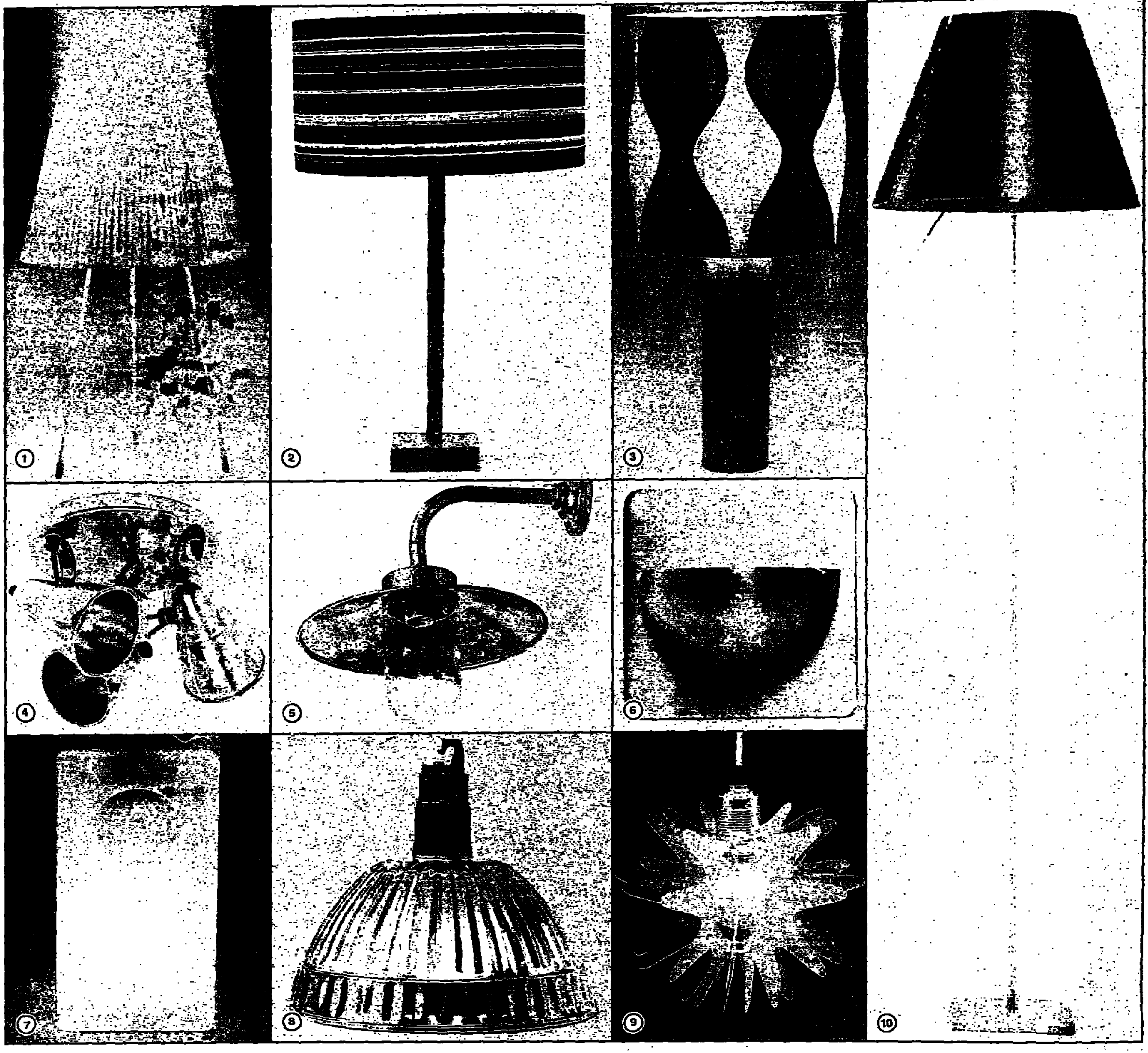
● *Giles Coren is away.*

Charge of the light brigade

LIGHTING is one of the most important aspects of home decorating, though most people rarely give it much thought. The way a room or space is lit determines its atmosphere, whether it is a living room, kitchen or bathroom, and there is now a vast array of styles on offer. SUE PARKER switches on to the best lights around.



ABOVE: Best and Lloyd desk lamp, £150, from the Conran Shop, 81 Fulham Road, London SW3 (0171-589 7401)



RIGHT: 1 Apollo table light, £19.95, from The Source, 26-40 Kensington High Street, W8 (0171-937 2626). **2** Striped drum shade on bamboo lamp base, £86, made to order by lampshade-maker Robert Wyatt (0181-530 6891). **3** The Prada-esque table light, £120, from Space, 214 Westbourne Grove, W11 (0171-229 6533). **4** Gotham, three-spot aluminium ceiling light, £45, from Bhs (0171-262 3288 for branches). **5** Wall-mounted galvanised outdoor light, £54.95, from The Source, as before. **6** Brushed stainless steel Duet wall lights, £195 a pair, from London Lighting, 135 Fulham Road, SW3 (0171-589 3612). **7** The Lio light, £77, designed by Sebastian Bergne, from Viaduct, 1-10 Summers Street, EC1 (0171-278 8456). **8** Large Pudding pendant light, £203, from Ruth Aram, 65 Heath Street, NW3 (0171-431 4008). **9** D light, £35, from Aero, 96 Westbourne Grove, W8 (0171-211 1950). **10** Constanza floor light, £119, from Habitat (0645 334433 for branches).

continued from page 1

agent was the catalyst for her journey. I had only explored these vague stirrings of discontent with strangers: or work acquaintances.

Perhaps it was too threatening or destabilising — altogether too close to home — to invite one's friends in to inspect the damage.

Yet once I cast out the net, it seemed that almost everyone I asked had given some private thought to the subject. One woman, whose husband had traded in a high-flying career in Canada for an uncertain future in England, gave a wry smile and said: "Most women are too busy propping up their husband's mid-life crises to have one of their own."

My oldest and least introspective friend, or so I thought, had the whole forty-something landscape devastatingly mapped out in her head. "It's the first time in our lives when we haven't got something positive to look forward to," she said. "In our late teens, there was the freedom of university, then the challenge of our first jobs and the excitement of exploring London, the thrill of the first big relationship, the wedding day, setting up home, the birth of the first child, but now..." her voice trailed away, "there isn't the same visceral bond with the children. There are times when I feel like their taxi driver. The only firsts left on the horizon are divorce and death."

Every story is both different and alike. Sometimes they are mirror images of the same thing. When you hit the big four-Ohh — the elegaic sigh of it; its regretful, dying fall — you can no longer, among other things, qualify as a Young British Novelist. If you are a mother and do not look like Paula Yates, you are likely to be called matronly. And if you do look like Yates at 40, you will be called "girlish", only as a form of oblique insult.

Cover photographs by PETER NICHOLLS/PICTURES. Montage by DANIEL BAMBRIDGE. Picture above shows Ginny Dougary at 26

Life begins at 40, the optimists say, but for some of my single and childless friends, this mid-life birthday was more wake than celebration.

One friend told me that on turning 40 she could only think that she might never fall in love again, or be loved. Another more sanguine pal is so happy that she longs to share her good fortune with another person.

My married friends, meanwhile, cast a wistful glance back to the time when they were single and child-free. For one friend, it is imbued with all the heady, high-octane rush of being youthful and desired. For her, the word "forty" was like a death knell, ringing out your invisibility to the world. "It rubs in the fact that your best years are behind you," she says. "No one's ever going to whistle at you in the street again, or catch your eye in the Tube."

I was surprised by this reaction to turning 40. My friend says that in her work as a designer, image is all important. You have to look sharp and hip and youthful or you won't get the work — which is why she sends her husband, who is five years her junior, to pitch to new clients. For her, being 40 obliterated every trace of the shimmering, sexy girl she once was.

> 'I was totally unprepared for the sudden, brutal eclipse of the laughing-eyed party girl I had thought was me'

For me, it was motherhood that extinguished my sense of girlhood — which I know is absurd because I was a very ungirly 30 when I became pregnant. But it was only around the time of my fortieth birthday when I felt the first ripples of rebellion and realised — however ludicrous or ungrateful it seemed, when I have so much — that all this time, in some secret place, I had been mourning the burial of that young, carefree self. Motherhood was like being jerked into adulthood. I was totally unprepared for the sudden, brutal eclipse of the laughing-eyed party girl which I had thought was me. And now I rather think that all those early months of weeping, which we put down to post-natal exhaustion, were partly to do — at some deep and not-to-be explored level, because it seems an act of defiance to be unhappy when you have a beautiful, healthy baby — with loss and a sort of bereavement.

The women I spoke to at Relate and the London Marriage Guidance Council told me that these feelings were entirely "normal". Women tend to put themselves on hold in their twenties and thirties, when it is as much as many of us can do, juggling with work and very young children, simply to get through the day.

What has changed, they say, is that women have become more open about their expectations. They are no longer prepared to say, at 40: "This is my lot — I must accept this."

Renata Olins, who became a marriage guidance counsellor in 1967, says that things have changed out of all recognition for huge numbers of women. "With greater levels of self-confidence and financial strength, comes greater ambition, so that as many woman as men are asking the question, 'Am I missing out?' We hear about someone's wonderful new lover or fabulous adventure and we're stuck in a three-bedroomed semi — and there's a wistfulness and envy and sense of lost opportunity."

I have yet to buy myself a motorbike, or dye my hair blonde or have a collagen implant. But the party girl is making a tentative comeback. At 40, she has not entirely forgotten how to have fun. There have been some late, late nights: some dancing and some carousing. There may be something in the air. The other night we had a dinner party, and at midnight — for the first time in ages — no one made a move. Four hours later, the guests staggered off into pre-dawn London. Perhaps this is how, in the end, we will survive my mid-life crisis — harmless acts of rebellion, recklessness writ small.

● *Ginny Dougary's new column starts in Weekend next Saturday.*

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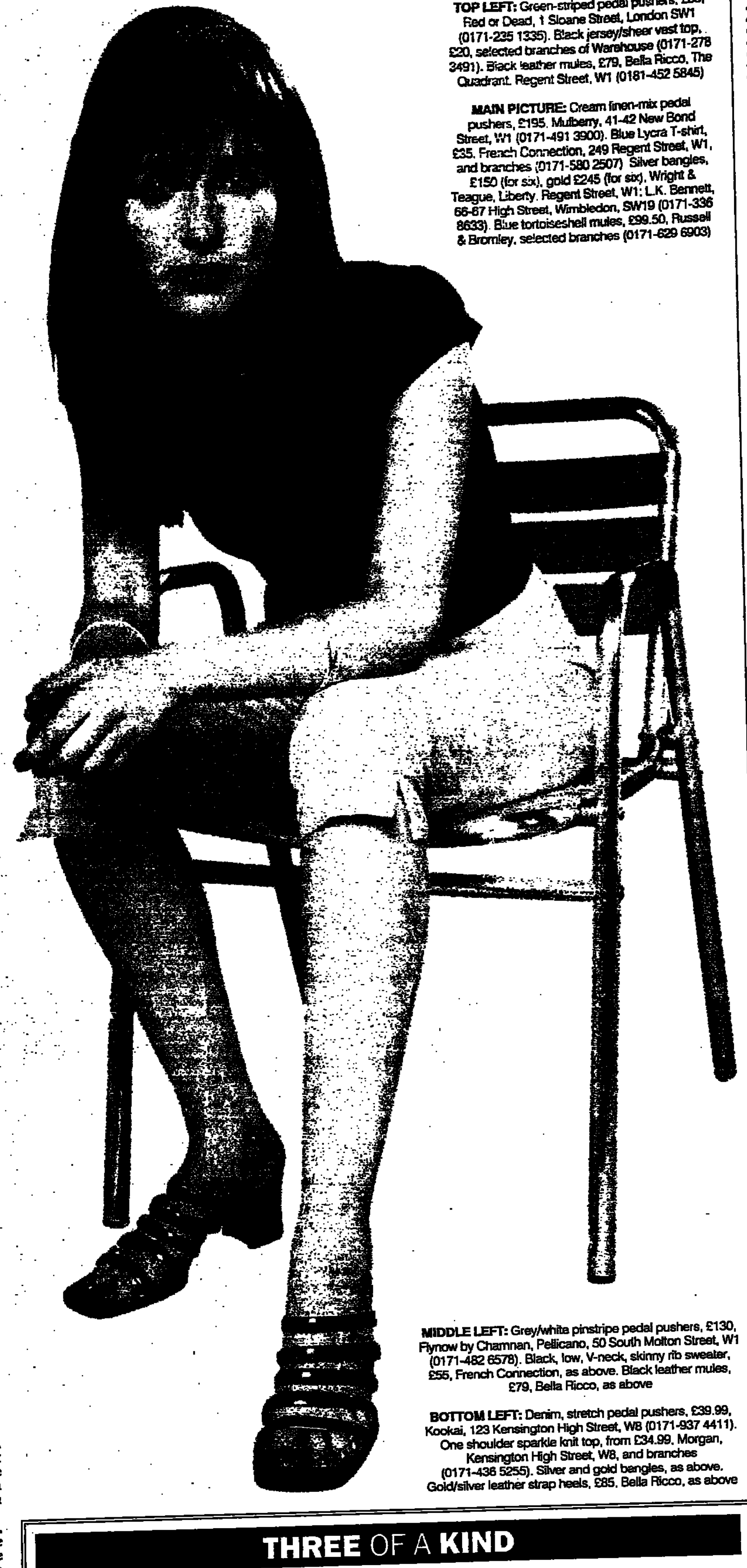
Pedal power pushes on

The calf-length classic looks set to replace leggings as the perfect throw-on, says **Heath Brown**



TOP LEFT: Green-striped pedal pushers, £55, Red or Dead, 1 Sloane Street, London SW1 (0171-235 1335). Black jersey/sheer vest top, £20, selected branches of Warehouse (0171-278 3491). Black leather mules, £79, Bella Ricco, The Quadrant, Regent Street, W1 (0181-452 5845)

MAIN PICTURE: Cream linen-mix pedal pushers, £195, Mulberry, 41-42 New Bond Street, W1 (0171-491 3900). Blue Lycra T-shirt, £35, French Connection, 249 Regent Street, W1, and branches (0171-580 2507) Silver bangles, £150 (for six), gold £245 (for six), Wright & Teague, Liberty, Regent Street, W1; L.K. Bennett, 66-67 High Street, Wimbledon, SW19 (0171-336 8633). Blue tortoiseshell mules, £99.50, Russell & Bromley, selected branches (0171-629 6903)

MIDDLE LEFT: Grey/white pinstripe pedal pushers, £130, Flynow by Chamnan, Pellicano, 50 South Molton Street, W1 (0171-482 6578). Black, low, V-neck, skinny rib sweater, £55, French Connection, as above. Black leather mules, £79, Bella Ricco, as above

BOTTOM LEFT: Denim, stretch pedal pushers, £39.99, Kookai, 123 Kensington High Street, W8 (0171-937 4411). One shoulder sparkle knit top, from £34.99, Morgan, Kensington High Street, W8, and branches (0171-436 5255). Silver and gold bangles, as above. Gold/silver leather strap heels, £85, Bella Ricco, as above

A comfortable pair of leggings has been the perfect throw-on garment for the past decade and a half, but until now a suitable substitute has not been available.

This year, the pedal pusher looks set to take over this role as high-street chains and designers have reintroduced the calf-length trouser style to their collections.

Cool for spring or summer, or if you are grabbing a bit of winter sun, they are comfortable and easy to wear with most casual separates.

Associated with the 1950s Riviera looks of Grace Kelly and Brigitte Bardot, pedal pushers were the young girl's weekend staples. Styles in cotton were sported by trendy beatnicks and teenagers, and satin versions could be found peeking out beneath shortened puffball evening skirts.

Today's pedal pushers can be dressed up or down, but the bulk of the current selection veer towards casual daywear.

They make perfect holiday-wear in cotton or linen and can be worn with flat sandals and mules when on shopping treks, or barefoot on the beach.

For a dressier look, platform shoes and higher heels look good with separates in more luxurious textiles, such as a satin effect or fabrics with a hint of sparkle.

A modern one-shoulder, assymetric top updates the look, or a 1970s-style boob-tube worn with tighter styles gives a new *Charlie's Angels* feel.

For a more casual, everyday look, simple polo necks and fitted jersey shirts can smarten up the pedal pusher, but heavier, bulky separates are best avoided, because they are too top-heavy for such a leggy style.

Shorter, above-the-knee pedal pushers are available, but the calf-length version is more flattering for most people. The cut can be loose or tight, according to your body shape, and small side-splits at the hem are optional. Tights, however, are a definite no-no.

For the younger girl, a fresher feel can be achieved with pedal pushers teamed with short, tight singlets, bright, tight T-shirts or fine knit cotton sweaters. For the older, more voluptuous woman, V-necks and longer length sweaters are an easy and comfortable choice.

An alternative, smarter look for the office can be achieved with a short, belted jacket. This can look flattering in softer fabrics, with the emphasis on the waist.

All photographs by
Richard Burns
Hair and make-up by
Sally Kvalheim
Styling by
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THREE OF A KIND

Forget lacy negligées and floaty nighties — pyjamas are the thing, in crisp white or a muted check. And 100 per cent cotton, looser fitting styles are more practical for bedtime. H.B.

Fine white cotton pyjamas, £98, The White House, 51 New Bond Street, London W1 (0171-629 3521)

Blue and white check pyjamas, £21.99, River Island, branches nationwide (0181-998 8822)

White cotton belted pyjamas, £34.99, Next, 189 Oxford Street, London W1 and nationwide (0116-284 9424)

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Jane Owen rounds up ideas about what's new and what's happening in the gardening world this month

LTL

Pupils at Sandfield County Primary School, near Guildford, Surrey, have livened up their playground with help from the charity Learning Through Landscapes

The class of '97 is going green

UNTIL we moved to the country, my children went to a primary school in north London. The school was excellent as a place of learning but the grounds were a dismal gloom of Tarmac and concrete — until the school's parents' committee transformed a long strip of dereliction into a "secret garden" of trees and flowers and a pond for the children. Their work softened its appearance, even though there was no grass to be seen.

Now the charity Learning Through Landscapes is inviting schools throughout Britain to do something with their school grounds by joining in School Grounds Day on May 2. To qualify, schools must complete the entrance forms by February 28. Entrants will get an information pack.

● *Learning Through Landscapes, Third Floor, Southside Offices, The Law Courts, Winchester SO23 9DL (01962 846258).*

Spud special

EVEN IF you do not have a garden you can still grow potatoes by stabbing drainage holes in a dustbin, filling it with compost, adding three seed tubers in early April, and harvesting about 6lb of new potatoes in July. You can discover more things to do with spuds next Saturday when the Henry Doubleday Research Association holds its Potato Day, 10am-4.30pm. About 100 varieties of seed potatoes will be on sale, and there will be a cookery demonstration.

● *Henry Doubleday Research Association, Ryton Organic Garden, Coventry CV8 3LG (01203 303517).*

Trust holidays

RENTING OUT holiday cottages around the country has earned the National Trust a welcome £4 million over the past five years. Having stayed at one in Cornwall — close to the Glendurgan gardens, near Helston — I can believe this. Many of the cottages are in beautifully kept gardens, and you have the high moral ground of contributing to the maintenance of our heritage. For a brochure, call 01225 791133.

GARDENER'S UPDATE

Little stinker

YEARS ago I bought some 6X fertiliser for the exhausted soil in my garden. It is made from chicken manure and is so rich it can overdo the nitrogen, but it was what my garden needed. However, I swore never to use it again because of the stench — far worse than conventional farmyard manure.

Now 6X has produced an odourless pellet form. Still pure muck and organic, though pretty expensive, it costs £4.99 for 5kg — as opposed to the fibrous, stinking 6X selling at £9.75 for 15kg. Mail order for fibrous only: 01494 792229.

Talking shop

THE TIMES gardener, Stephen Anderton, will be talking to the Garden History Society about the newly restored gardens at Belsay Hall in Northumberland, where he was head gardener until last year. His is one in a series of six garden history lectures on various landscapes from Europe to America by such speakers as Dr Christopher Thacker and Jim Reynolds. The lectures are being held on Wednesdays from February 5 to March 12, starting at 6pm, at the Scientific Society's Lecture Theatre, New Burlington Place, London W1.

Those in the know should insist that Anderton sings at the end of his lecture — his ballads are to gardening what *Private Eye* is to politics.

● *Further information from the Garden History Society, 77 Cowcross Street, London EC1M 6BP (0171-608 2409). Tickets £7.*

Lion king

FANCY a 9.4m (about 31ft) petrified lion in your garden? Worried about the weight?

Capital Garden Products fake them in glass fibre — weight 9kg (19½lb) — and fill them with concrete once in position. They are finished in "stone", "terracotta" or bronzange (antique bronze effect) and cost £960 for a pair. Ring 01580 201092 for your nearest stockist or mail order.

FIND OF THE MONTH

THE TUEFEL, or "devil", is the latest way to churn up the earth. It looks like Lucifer's pronged fire tong and, to use it, you adopt an action as if you were opening and closing a water mains stopcock in the road. The tool breaks up clay and clears brambles as would a rotovator, but works in small spaces and is less back-breaking than a garden fork. However, the Tuefel cannot turn the soil in the same way. The Maxi Teufel, which has four sharp prongs — two on each side of a central spike, which holds the tool in place during the swivel action — costs £39.95. The Midi Teufel has one prong on either side of the spike and costs £34.95. The Mini Teufel, designed for window boxes, costs £5.99. For garden centre stockists, call the distributor, Sandholzer (UK), on 01625 526123. Alternatively, Sandholzer will sell readers the tools with free postage and packing.

PLANT OF THE MONTH

ECHEVERIA SUBRIGIDA. These fleshy succulents are especially appealing at this time of year when the dramatic rosettes of leaves, about six inches across, defy wintry windowsills. Subrigida has spectacular, flat, blue-white leaves and forms a cool pool of elegance in the middle of a vulgar, massed *Primula obconica* in purple, cerise, pink and white. If a leaf is bruised it curls and withers, unlike other echeverias, which propagate easily from leaf and stem. This is why it is almost impossible to buy, even from specialist nurseries such as Southfields, in Lincolnshire, which stocks 35 varieties but cannot sell subrigida this year, at least. However, the nursery has two mother plants producing seed and hopes to be able to sell some small subrigidas in 1998.

● *Southfields Nurseries, Bourne Road, Morton, Bourne, Lincolnshire PE10 ORH (01778 570168).*

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Putting bulbs out to grass

Flowers need careful planting to create a natural effect in lawns. **Nigel Colborn** offers a few tips

The marriage between bulbs and grassland was made in heaven. Nothing could be more natural. In the subalpine meadows of the Pyrenees in spring wild hoop-petticoat narcissus grow thickly enough to dust the landscape with gold.

In the autumn pastureland of the Vosges, lilac-mauve blooms of colchicums erupt. And further afield, South Africa's grasses shelter a rich mix of freesias, ixias, agapanthus and orange or purple lachenalias. Yet ask a gardener in Britain what we can naturalise and the answer will probably be limited to daffodils and crocus.

To the unimaginative, "naturalising" daffodils simply means planting them in grass, but how can they be made to look truly natural? And how does one manage grass if mowing will destroy the bulbs? Leave it uncut, and the lawn becomes a tussocky mess; cut too early and none of your bulbs will survive.

The aim must be to create a wild habitat in microcosm.

Most natural grassland carries an assortment of species, but a garden needs to be more than a mere imitation of the wild. You have to tweak, adjust and, above all, enrich. To a collection of European bulbs that might form the basis of a naturalised area, you could add such exotica as North American erythroniums, wild Eurasian tulips and even cultivated hybrid daffodils without losing the effect of a wild habitat.

Tastes differ but the time to begin to compile your "want" list starts now, as the bulbs begin to bloom, rather than being seduced by the lurid plant portraits that accompany dry bulbs in autumn displays at the garden centres.

Take care, though, as you walk among bulb-impregnated turf in February. Later species may still be invisible, but their young shoots are easily damaged if trodden on.

Arranging the planting to look wild presents a challenge. Experts may tell you to scatter bulbs by throwing them about the turf and planting them where they fall. A simplistic approach that works provided you stick to the falling pattern of the bulbs and plant them individually and in groups of differing sizes. This takes effort, but the alternative of lifting slabs of turf and planting groups of bulbs beneath them results in an unnatural-looking display of clumps.

Small bulbs cannot be thrown — you would never see them again — but it is not difficult to imitate a similar randomness. As for snowdrops and aconites — these can be moved now while in full flower without any damage.

Some gardening gurus recommend feeding with a high potash fertiliser as bulbs grow, but that is unnecessary for those in grass. All that is needed, after five or six years, is to lift congested clumps, divide the bulbs and replant.

Although planting mechanics are straightforward, the artistic side demands flair. At its simplest level, the aim is to maximise spring colour, but an artistic gardener will be canny enough to extend the season forwards into summer and backwards through winter to the preceding autumn.

A run through might begin with September colchicums, or such delicate autumn crocuses as the bluish-mauve *Crocus speciosus*. Snowdrops are winter things, but an enchanting Greek sub-species of the common one — *Galanthus nivalis* ssp *reginae-olgae* — pops up its flowers, sans foliage, during autumn. Admittedly, these can look incongruous among falling leaves, but a bunch of snowdrops on St Luke's day (October 18) is terrific for one-upmanship.

Scale is crucial to success. Many parks and gardens people ruin their naturalising by shoving in wodges of huge daffodils or big Dutch crocus. Dramatic as these are, they blot out the delicate treasures that are necessary to extend and enhance the wild effect. Better to stick to species crocus — *Crocus chrysanthus*, *C. sieberi* and so on — and to use such small, elegant narcissus varieties as 'February Gold', or, better still, genuine wild daffodils, *Narcissus pseudonarcissus*. Soon after these can come snakeshead fritillaries — perfect companions for cowslips — and the indestructible Spanish bluebell.

To achieve that long run of colour and charm without losing control of the grass presents a difficult challenge. Countryside grass tends to be grazed, or is on such poor soil that it stays short naturally. In a garden there has to be a cutting regime, even if it is limited to the summer period. The easiest approach seems to be to mow when the daffodil leaves have withered, usually early July. The first cut can be difficult, but the ugliness of the newly shorn patch soon transforms to green and, if regularly cut with blades set at maximum height, will not harm the plants among the grasses.

Once autumn bulbs begin to flower, mowing has to stop, but grass can grow surprisingly long before winter arrives. A final cut in early December may therefore be necessary, even if this damages the last of the autumn flowers.

Experts warn against mowing when frost is likely, but for a meadow, severe frost on newly cut grass matters not a jot. If you feel this regime is too untidy, you can still naturalise bulbs for winter and spring, but restore the lawn for summer. The Royal Horticultural Society says that daffodils cut back six weeks after flowering will bloom reasonably well the following year. So you can have colour from late December, with such snowdrops as *Galanthus elwesii*, through to mid-April, when early blooming narcissus species, such as *Narcissus tazetta* or the lemon-flowered miniature 'Hawera', reach their peak. With that regime, mowing can start in late May — tidier, but you lose out on such fragrant latecomers as jonquils and pheasant eye narcissus.

Meadow-style naturalising is rich with possibilities for special effects. You can try smart colour combinations — the golden yellow mini narcissus 'Tête-à-tête' set among deep blue *Scilla siberica* for instance — or you could tinker with strict colour schemes over the whole area.

WEEKEND TIPS

- *Plant deciduous trees and shrubs this month, especially fruit trees.*
- Order plugs and *plantlets for spring* delivery, where required *for container displays.*
- Complete oiling or other treatments of wooden garden furniture, so it has time to soak in completely *before spring.*
- Spray outdoor peaches with Bordeaux mixture before the buds swell, to avoid leaf curl.
- Fallen or dead holly leaves may be put among the stems of bamboo, to stop squirrels nibbling the young shoots in spring.

A-Z BOTANICAL COLLECTION

The bluish-mauve *Crocus speciosus* is perfect for creating a wild look to grassland

GARDEN ANSWERS

STEPHEN ANDERTON

replies to readers' letters

Q **How can I raise large numbers of the foliage plant *Helichrysum* 'Silver Bush'? I want to add two to each of my 50 hanging baskets, which would cost me £100 to buy as plantlets in April. I have a heated greenhouse and sodium lighting.** — E.C. Thomas, Paignton, *Devon.*

A Helichrysums make excellent grey foils for more colourful planting in pots and baskets. But you must always plan for large numbers of anything. If you really want your plants this year, buy 20 plants in April, grow them hard and fast under glass, and plunder them for tip cuttings in May. Both parent plants and cuttings will be ready to go outside in June. Alternatively, if you can wait until next year, buy just a few plantlets, grow them on, and take all your cuttings in late summer, keeping them cool enough to stand still in winter under glass.

Q **An old yew tree we removed, with the stump ground out, has left a lot of soil mixed up with bits of wood and roots. Could this area be used to plant a circle of roses?** — Mrs E.A. Bird, Leighton *Buzzard, Bedfordshire.*

A If the grinder has done a good job, you could plant what you like where the trunk stood. But remember there will still be a large area of garden full of finer roots, around the circle you had ground out, and the ground-out area will be impoverished.

Take out a third of the loose soil, and replace it with manure or compost, leave it fallow for this year, and plant in the autumn.

Q **I have a 50-yard chainlink boundary adjoining a playing field and want to plant an evergreen prickly hedge or, better still, a prickly evergreen man-high shrubbery. What could I plant to provide foliage colour and what flowering climbers could I add?** — R.J. Brake, *Combe Down, Bath,* Somerset.

A Think hard before you plant a prickly hedge; the clippings are foul to deal with and often lead to wheelbarrow punctures. Behind solid chainlink fencing you could plant an evergreen screen. Would a hedge of mixed hollies be a compromise? Choose carefully, because many fancy varieties — green and variegated — are spineless. Common holly is the most spiny.

If you really want a fast, vicious, spiny hedge plant *Berberis stenophylla*, which has narrow leaves, arching growth and orange flowers. You could add a few tamer berberis to the front of a holly hedge — species such as *Berberis verruculosa*, *B. julianae* and *B. darwinii*.

Solid evergreen hedges tend to be shaded out and made patchy by vigorous climbers, and gentler climbers find the competition from the hedge difficult. Why not plant an instant screen of self-twining hops on the chainlink for the first few years? And plant some colourful shrubs in front of your prickly ones?

● *Readers should write to: Garden Answers, Weekend,* The Times, *1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. We regret it may not be possible to deal with every request. Advice is offered without legal responsibility.* The Times *also regrets that enclosures cannot be returned.*

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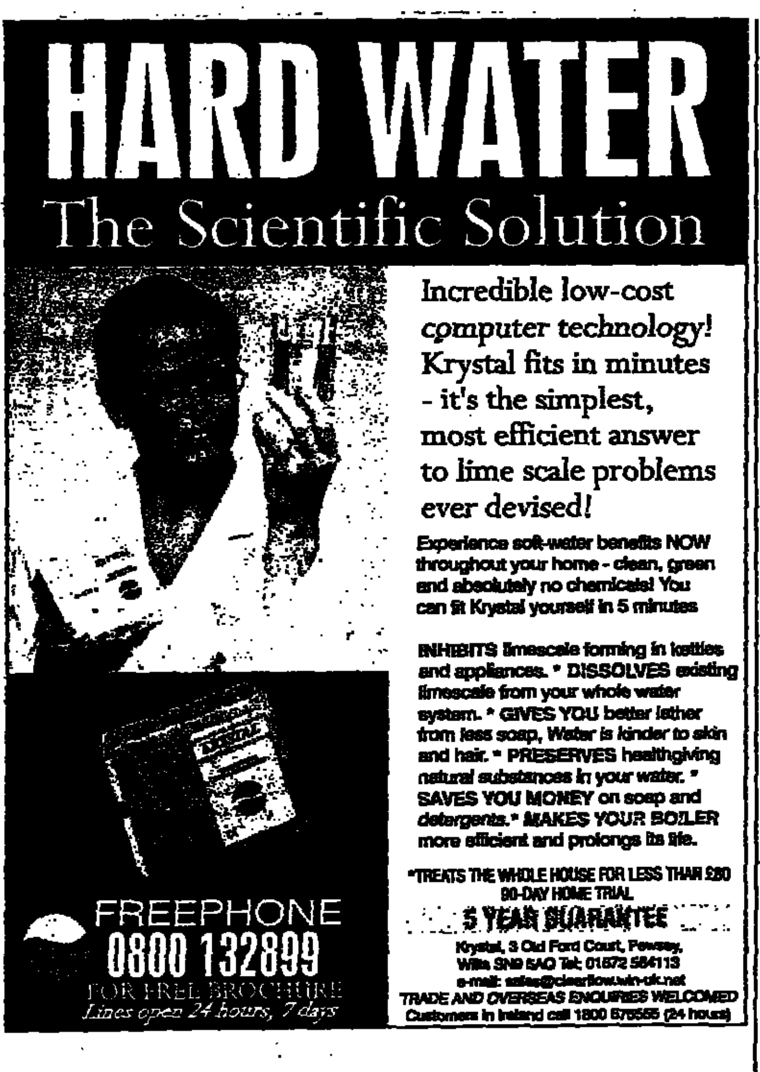

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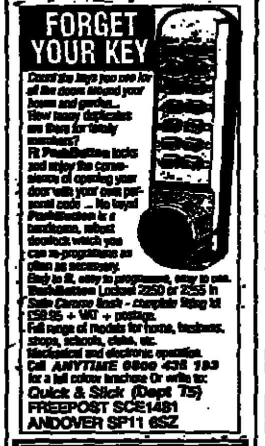

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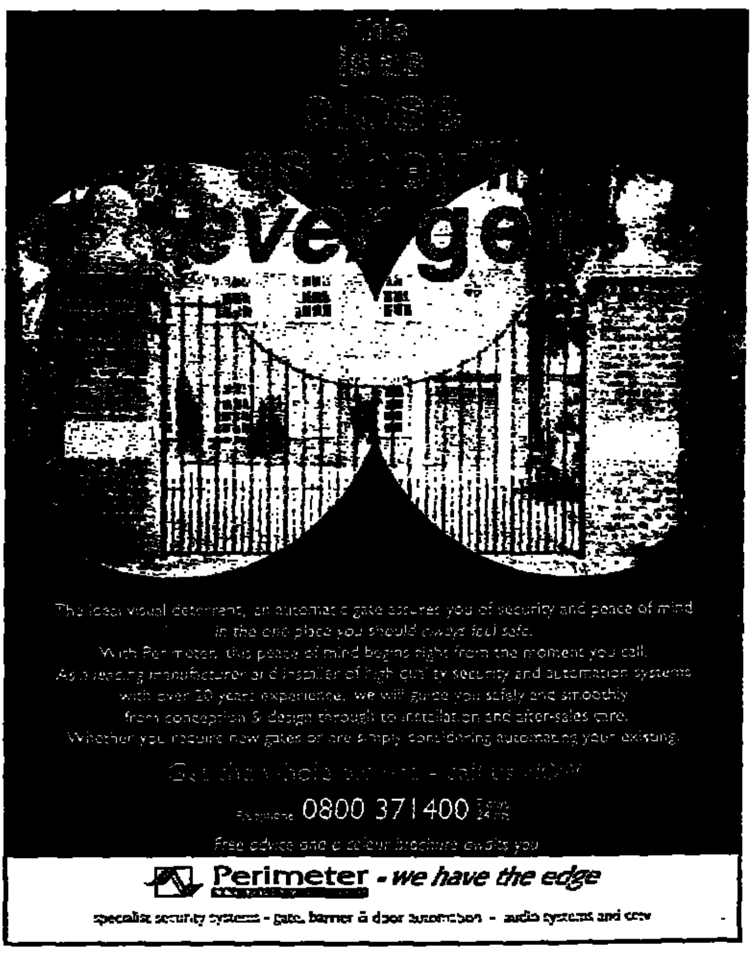

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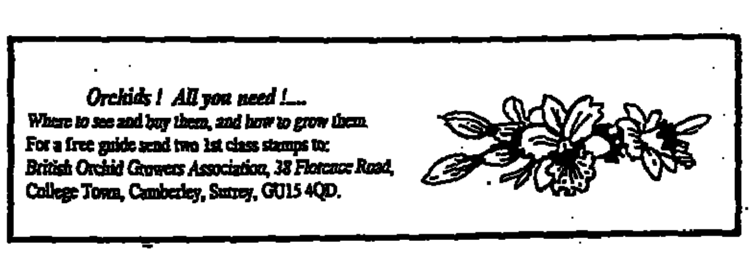

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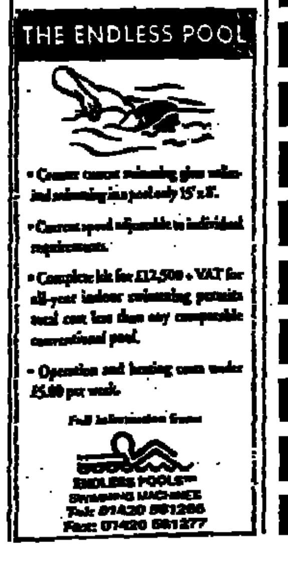

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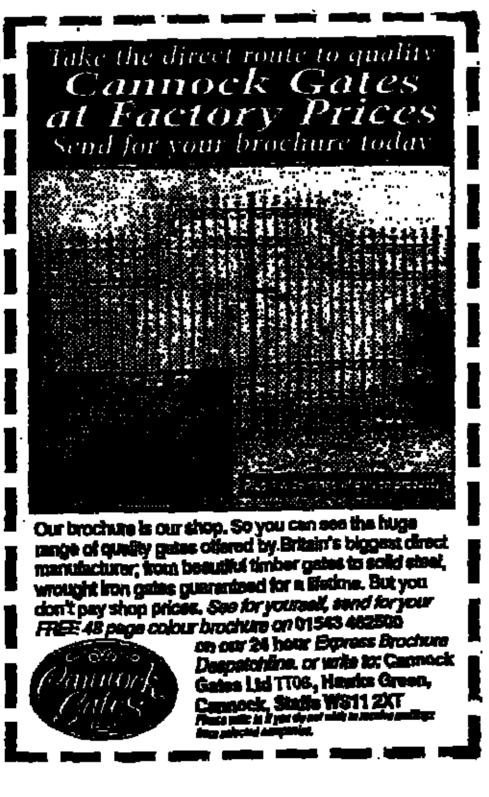

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This month, readers question the importance of sportsmen in the countryside, explain the joys of a privy and find a use for turkey feathers

The balance between predator and prey

DOWN TO EARTH

PAUL HEINEY

Another month, another rich crop of letters. Thank you for them. They may not all be acknowledged or printed, but they are all read and enjoyed. This month they divide into three neat piles, two dealing with what might be called personal comfort, and the third addressing issues of wider importance. Let us begin with the weighties.

The issue arose a month ago as a result of a letter from Christopher Pryor of Sheffield on the importance of sportsmen in the countryside. He wrote:

Do [well-meaning urban conservationists] not realise that the countryside looks as it does today as a result of true conservationists: field sportsmen and women who have always known how important it is to maintain the delicate balance between predator and prey?

In reply to which I raised a question: if we hitherto allowed the balance of nature to rest safely in the hands of the country sportsmen, what has happened to make us lose that trust? Is it something about the sportsmen that has changed?

Strangely, there has been a silence from the sportsmen, but not from those who have lived long in the countryside and are well placed to witness change. Marcus Judd, now retired and living in Wickham Market, Suffolk, writes:

My father lived a country life and, when not tending his garden, milking or delivering milk, he roamed the fields with his shotgun. The shooting was free. The game was not artificially reared but naturally regenerated. In order to shoot it, my father had to know the countryside, the habits and habitat of his prey. He shot with care, always leaving some for next week and always shot at the end of the range to reduce the amount of shot in a bird. I sense that things are very different now. Game birds are seen as a crop or budget centre, thus the nature of the sport changes along with those participating.

Equally telling is a revelation in his opening paragraph where he writes:

I eat game two or three times a week in the season, but do not shoot. It is good cheap meat. Tomorrow I shall eat a mallard costing £1.40 stuffed with the sloes from this year's gin, which of course came free from the hedgerows (the sloes, not the gin!

JULIAN HERBERT

Shooting might receive a better reception if there appeared to be a better reason for it than "sport". One reader suggested controlled shooting of wildfowl such as Canada geese for sale

He may be on to something here. Is it because shooting is now for pleasure, not sustenance that sportsmen are seen in a different light? There were several letters which suggested that shooting might receive a better reception if there appeared to be a better reason for it than "sport". Mrs Thiel of Reading writes:

On a Devonshire farm I visit, I saw a flock of about 200 Canada geese take up residence in a field of winter wheat which they proceeded to eat. The farmer shot about 35 birds before driving them off and saving his crop. A few went in the freezer, a few were given to friends and the rest were left for the foxes. Is it not time controlled shooting for sale was allowed — and would this not be more like conservation than the present state of affairs?

Speaking personally, I would happily eat a marauding goose providing the number shot was controlled — which in wildfowling it usually is by virtue of the birds being far more cunning than the guns. Those horrified at the thought and fearful that a species would be wiped out should remember that the only reason the pheasant flourishes is because it is the object of sportsmen's attention.

Perhaps if Delia Smith were to cast her magic spell over the Canada goose, farmers could profitably rid themselves of a pest and we could eat poultry which has not spent its entire life in a stinking intensive unit.

Where is the flaw in this? Alas the weak link is us, the consumers, who, smitten with a new taste, would then demand it in large quantities, every day of the year, and cheaply. Then would come the Canada goose farms to feed the supermarket-led demand. It has happened with deer.

To matters of equal, if rather more personal importance. I wrote some weeks ago of my wish to celebrate the millennium by restoring to the countryside the privy — the outside lavatory. I regret that architects have been slow to come forward with designs, but readers have been swift with their support.

Audrey Vincombe, who writes from Greenwich, loathes the planned millennium dome and suggests I adopt that design for my privy because it is fit for nothing else. She adds:

I had an old cousin, a botanist, who daily walked down her garden path with her chamber pot to her compost heap. Uric acid is essential for good compost, she told me. All power to your elbow.

And Jean Cowley, from Northallerton in Yorkshire, writes:

Our privy was situated across a clean yard (albeit down five steep steps) and tacked on to a row of outhouses, facing south, discreetly, round a corner. When cooking meals for six I could dash across and cool off, picking a rose on the way, and smelling the honeysuckle draped over the pantiled roof. And it was lovely for the children, who were thrust outside whatever the weather.

The privy — good for the planet, good for the body, good for the soul. I shall not let this campaign drop.

Finally, I have done down the turkey by writing that it is a useless bird, fit for nothing but stuffing. This was in the context of my new feather bed which is filled with goose down because turkey will not do. I had hoped that all the turkey feathers that go to waste every Christmas could be put to better use.

The Reverend Dowding of Burnley says that "feather beds are the work of the devil", so his wife writes to tell me, "because they are so comfortable that they encourage slothfulness". He is dead right. The feather bed is making sinners of us all in this household.

But I was wrong about turkey feathers. Martin Taylor of Pens and Feathers in Longridge, Lancashire, writes in a beautiful hand:

Turkey feathers do have a use — to calligraphers. Each wing has, on the leading edge, a number of pinion feathers and these can be cured and cut to make quill pens. We sell quills and the demand is weighted in favour of the turkey ones.

To prove it, he kindly sent me one and this column has been written using it. Your letters are always welcome, but before removing a turkey feather to write them, ask the turkey nicely.

● *Letters are published on the first Saturday of every month. Write to Paul Heiney, Weekend,* The Times, *1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN.*

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Meet the mandarins of Berkshire

I WAS walking past a lake in Berkshire recently when a girl sitting on the bank asked, "Are you a birdwatcher?" She had evidently seen the field glasses dangling from my neck. I replied that I was, and she said: "Am I going mad, or did I just see a parrot go whizzing over the lake?"

"You're not mad," I said — for I had seen it, too.

The startling bird was a rose-ringed parakeet — which was called a ring-necked parakeet last time I wrote about it here, but which has since changed its official name to this more romantic version. Rose-ringed parakeets, which are green birds with a pink neckmark, a long tail and a screeching cry, have recently established themselves here in small colonies, mainly in the South. Their ancestors are Asian birds which must have been brought here and then escaped or been released.

While the girl and I were talking, I was able to point out to her two other birds of similar origin — a pair of mandarin ducks swimming about near some overhanging rhododendrons on the far side of the lake.

They, too, are now officially on the British list, in the "C" category which is defined as "established feral birds that are self-maintaining". The word "feral" is applied to non-native birds that have gone wild in this country.

I first came across mandarin ducks when I was a schoolboy. At that time they were not on the British list, nor to be found in any bird book, and a schoolfriend and I were greatly puzzled by them. We would see them shooting through the trees around these wooded Berkshire lakes, whistling loudly, and eventually we got a good view of them on the water.

That was an astonishing moment. We had never imagined birds like them. The drakes are spectacular, with two big orange appendages that look like sails or tents rising above their wings, orange cheeks and a flowing white crest. The females are not gaudy like this, but are also quite striking in their silvery-grey plumage. By asking around we managed to find out what they were, and since then they have become a familiar sight in some areas. There are now thought to be about 3,000 of them in Britain. In fact, they are entitled to be called British birds quite as much as to be called anything else.

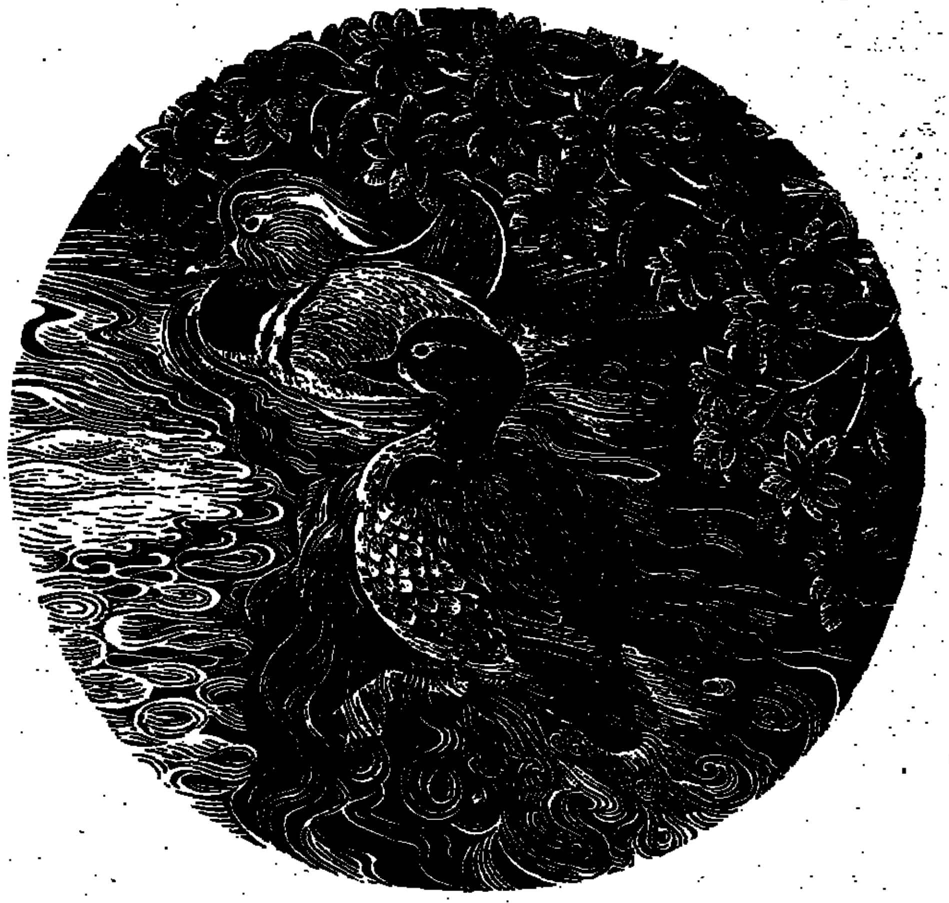
In the whole of the Far East outside Japan, there are now probably no more of them than are to be found in this country, and in Japan there are only about the same number. Britain is where their prospects lie.

They are essentially woodland duck, nesting in holes in trees and for part of the year feeding on acorns and chestnuts under the trees. In Windsor Great Park they have taken to building in the nest boxes that have been provided for them.

Other recent additions to the "C" category include the Egyptian goose, a tree-nesting goose originally imported from South Africa. This is a grotesque bird, more closely related to the shelduck than to real geese. It is a large, pinkish creature, with a face-patch that looks like a black eye and an enormous white wing-patch. There are about 1,000 in Britain on lakes and gravel pits, mostly in East Anglia. It does not breed very successfully because it starts in February and March, which is too early for this country.

What with these birds, the flocks of Canada geese, the ruddy ducks, the little owl and the exotic pheasants — Lady Amherst's pheasant and the golden pheasant — that great 18th-century naturalist Gilbert White, author of the *Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne*, would have a great many shocks if he rode on his horse through the countryside today.

DERWENT MAY



PETER BROWN

Distinctive mandarin ducks are a relatively common sight in the wild in Britain

FEATHER REPORT

● **What's about:** *Birders — listen for the first songs of male chaffinches. Twitchers — pied-billed grebe, South Norwood lake, London SE25; little bunting, South Milton Ley, Devon; ferrugenous duck, New Hythe gravel pits, Kent. Details from Birdline 0891 700222. Calls cost 40p a minute cheap rate, 50p at all other times.*

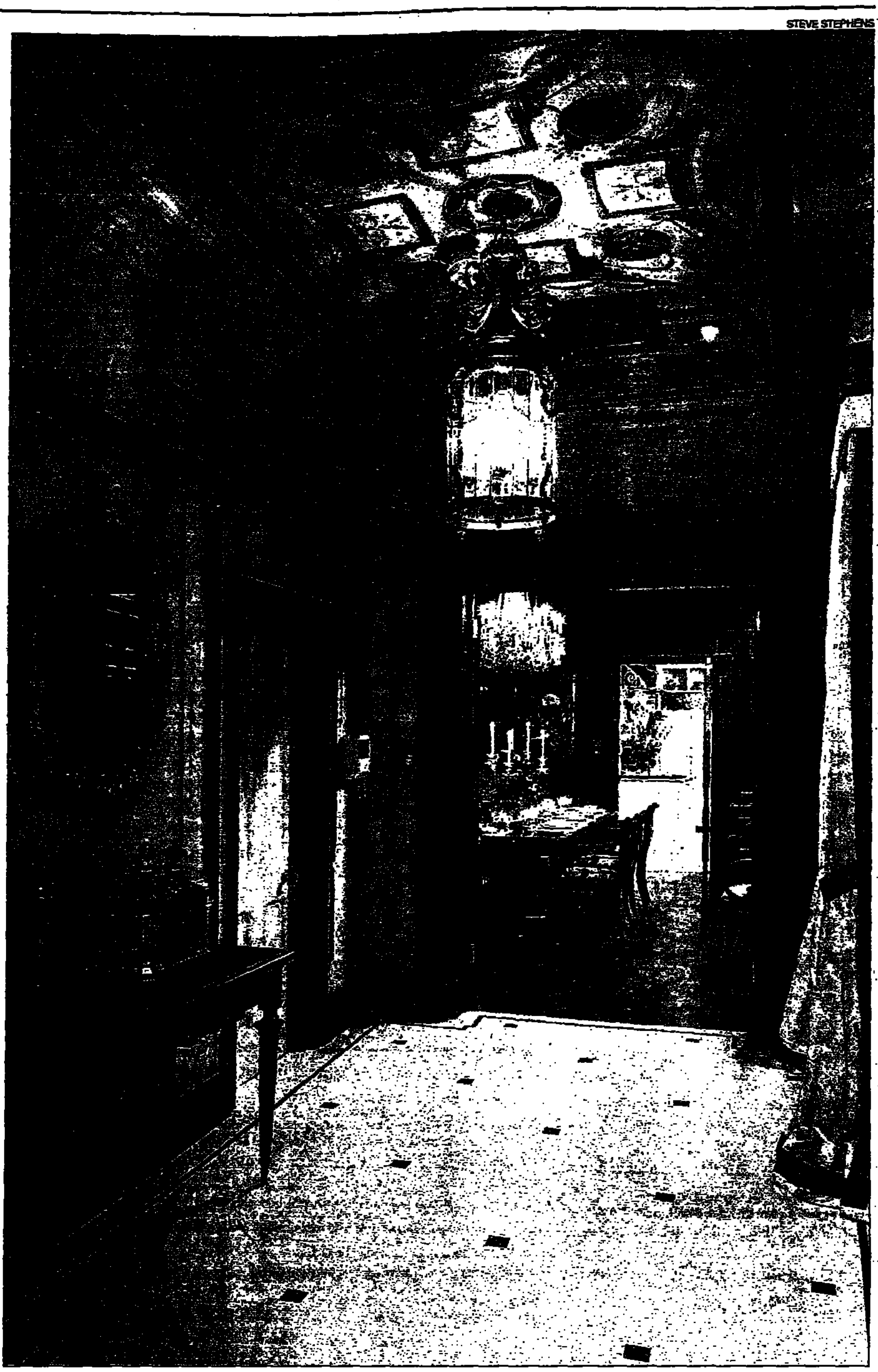
The "grand salon" is 36ft long, with decorative ceiling, chandelier, marble fireplace and coal-effect gas fire

Des res with ice box to die for

Katherine Bergen on an exotic shrine to Napoleon in London's smartest area

DES JENSON

STEVE STEPHENS



Behind the impressive frontage (above) on to Eccleston Street, is a lavishly decorated entrance hall (right), which leads into a large, walnut-panelled dining room and on to the kitchen/breakfast room

If moving house is second only to divorce in terms of stress, imagine the pleasure of moving into a house which is not only fully furnished but where the owner has thrown in everything from the tea towels to the cutlery.

This does, of course, create a small problem: what to do with your own linen and pots and pans. However, the all-inclusive purchase would be ideal perhaps, for a rich foreign family who have had to flee their country with only their clothes.

Sutherland House in Eaton Square, central London, is for sale at £5 million fully furnished or £4.25 million unfurnished. The American owner, whose last home in London was once owned by Ava Gardner, is inclined to decorate her properties according to a theme. Her last home paid homage to Hollywood in honour of Miss Gardner and this one is a shrine to Napoleon. Portrait miniatures of the general abound. The bee, his emblem, is woven into furnishing fabrics. The original eagle from the standard which went with him into exile on St Helena is mounted in the study, and a copy of one of his favourite portraits by Ingrès dominates the drawing room.

In fact, the eye is so distracted by the lavishness of the decor — the walls are painted with *trompe-l'oeil* scenes — that it is difficult to perceive the bare bones of the building.

From under the weight of the African walnut panelling and the Baccarat crystal chandeliers, the house really emerges as half of what was once a much larger house. The 36ft-long "grand salon", or drawing room, was formerly the ballroom belonging to the once complete house and other rooms have been radically redistributed. The owner has added the front door and portico on Eccleston Street, guest bedrooms have been created in the basement and a whole new floor has been added to accommodate the master bedroom and two *en suite* bathrooms at the top of the house.

Even the name of the house is new. It was formerly called No 24a, but this is not a measly 24a type of house. After negotiations with the Grosvenor Estate, the owner rescued it from this ignominy and adopted the suggestion to call it Sutherland House.

The attention to detail within is impressive. There is little if anything for a new owner to do. Even the extra leaves for the dining room table have their own specially adapted cupboard.

The kitchen has two of everything: dishwashers, cookers, fridges. A small spiral staircase winds from the kitchen up to the drawing room so that staff can clean there during dinner without disturbing guests by walking through the dining room.

My favorite little extra is the ice machine in the bar on the first floor which makes ice that is crystal clear. It is important after being introduced to this excellent gizmo not to have a 'personal crisis of confidence: I began, inwardly, to berate my inadequate ice box at home which produces only the vulgar opaque variety. These are the treats one should expect in a property of this price range.

Looking beyond the fact that you might inherit a full set of fish knives if you moved in here, above all what you get for your money are size, location and security. There is a little something for everyone. For the hygenic, the house may have only five bedrooms but each has an *en suite* bathroom. For people who enjoy serious entertaining, the drawing room easily holds 75 people. The address snob will appreciate its location in the heart of Belgravia and one of the smartest parts of London, where near neighbours include the racehorse-owning Maktoums. The most neurotic householder will feel comforted by the security system which includes infra-red detectors, alarm key pads and panic buttons. The hypochondriac will approve of the air and water purification systems. The music lover can twiddle with the zoned sound system. Personally I will never forget the power shower-heads which were the size of manhole covers. True luxury.

The garden lover may be unhappy. There is no private garden, although residents do have access to the communal gardens. The creative type, too, might feel frustrated. This is a house decorated very much to a personal taste. But the wealthy householder in a hurry could be happily ensconced even before the change of address cards come back from the printers.

The hooligan in me insists on one last proviso: labradorification. Such is the pristine nature of this house that it needs to be distressed a little by, perhaps, two large but friendly dogs. The resulting disarray should be perfect.

● *Agent: De Groot Collis, 0171-235 8090.*

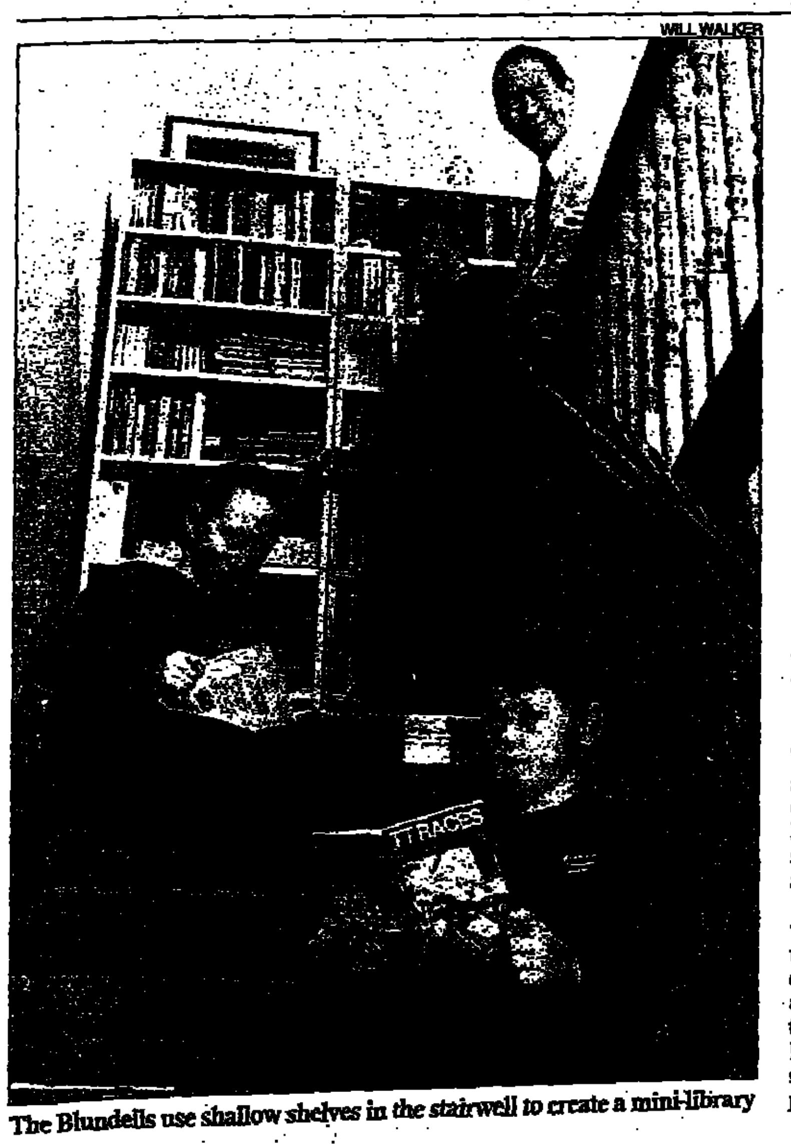
HOUSE OF THE WEEK

Sutherland House, Eaton Square, London SW1

● **Lease:** 72 years, expiring March 24, 2069. ● **Ground rent:** £2,000pa with reviews. ● **Parking:** Private parking in mews behind house. ● **Corner shops:** When exhausted, totter over to the nearby House of Roux to buy pre-prepared dishes like boned quail for dinner. Jeraboam, the specialist cheese shop, *within instant gratification distance.* ● **Transport:** *On the* chauffeur's day off, taxi waiting time about 30 seconds. Also a *taxi rank in Sloane Square.* ● **Neighbours:** *The Queen is a* stone's throw away; Baroness Thatcher's headquarters are nearby; Duke of Westminster, *owner of the Grosvenor Estates,* can sometimes be spotted examining renovation work.

● **Pub:** The Duke of Wellington, known as the Duke of Boot.

WILL WALKER



The Blundells use shallow shelves in the stairwell to create a mini-library

SELLING POINTS

STORAGE SPACE

"Have nothing in your houses which you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful," was William Morris's dictum. Unfortunately, few of us are disciplined enough to heed his advice. We hoard quantities of "stuff" that we know, one day, will come in useful — carpet cut-offs, old paint cans, spare pillows, school trunks, and broken squash rackets, plus books, clothes, sports gear, camping equipment and DIY tools used only occasionally.

These items prey heavily on the mind of buyers when sizing up a new house to move into. Where are they going to store them all?

Not every house comes with basement or boxroom. Modern houses, in particular, pay scant attention to storage spaces, expecting people to stack everything in the downstairs closet or in the garage.

The secret is to unlock "dead" space: the hallways, landings, stairwells, alcoves, roof and wall spaces that are not earning their keep.

The roof space is the most obvious. Lay sheets of chipboard or hardboard over the joists to create a firm surface. A folding loft-ladder and electric light are optional but make life easier. You now have a perfect space for storing such seasonal items as sledges, skis and camping gear.

Staircases can prove surprisingly versatile. Cupboards can be fitted underneath the stairs, while the long drop of the stairwell can function as a mini-library, with shallow shelves to allow room for people to pass. Deeper shelves near the top can hold seldom-used items, such as rugs or picnic hampers so that the wall becomes visually attractive as well as functional.

A clever carpenter can even turn the individual steps of a staircase into drawers — the riser fitted with a shallow drawer pull in the front — to store anything from DIY tools to household files.

Verity and Ralph Blundell discovered their extra staircase space when looking for somewhere to store the overflow of books from their bedroom. "We had just decorated the landing and didn't want to wreck that area, so we put a bookcase at the top of the stairs while deciding what to do," Mrs Blundell says. "It was then that we realised what a good use of space it was.

The Blundells now have two bookcases stretched across the stairwell of their Victorian, terraced home at Newcastle upon Tyne. "The cases also light up and warm what was previously a dark area," Mrs Blundell says. "When you walk in through the front door your eye is drawn up the stairs. It gives a feeling of vitality to the house."

Hallways and landings are "circulation spaces" in architectspeak because they take up a lot of room but are seldom areas in which people gather. This makes them perfect for extra storage. Think about lining one wall with ceiling-height, built-in cupboards. Provided you plan carefully, with shelves of varying depth (better still, fit adjustable shelving), you can store everything here from stepladders to paint cans.

Bland, DIY-store doors and cupboard panels can be smartened up with strips of beading or quirky handles, or by adding contrasting coloured plinths and kickboards. Louvred doors are more attractive, although more expensive, while glass panes, hung on the inside with pleated curtaining, can look stylish. But if the corridor is narrow, opt for sliding doors.

Take a close look around other rooms for dead spaces. Alcoves above bedheads, wall spaces above bedroom windows, the unused gap above an existing fitted cupboard, the base of window seats, all can be fitted with shelves or cupboards. But ensure the supporting brackets are strong enough.

You can never be too rich or too thin or have too much storage. Any interior designer will say you need twice as much as you think.

If you are really smart you could do as the Japanese do and use that ultimate bit of dead space: the gap under the floorboards. Our ergonomically minded Eastern cousins line these areas with storage boxes. Just think how disappointed the burglar will be when, instead of uncovering the family silver, he discovers your old school reports.

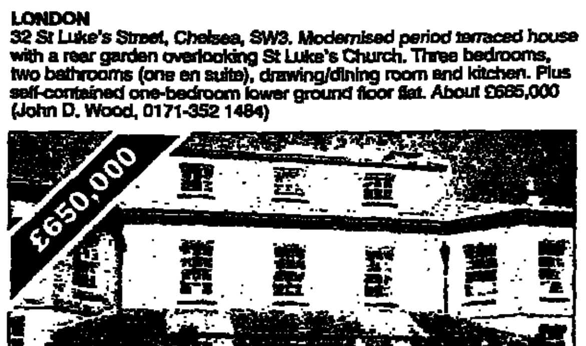
HELEN PICKLES

FOR SALE

ABOUT £675,000

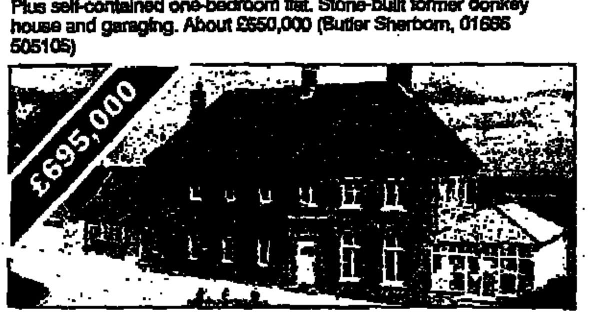
£665,000

LONDON
32 St Luke's Street, Chelsea, SW3. Modernised period terraced house with a rear garden overlooking St Luke's Church. Three bedrooms, two bathrooms (one en suite), drawing/dining room and kitchen. Plus self-contained one-bedroom lower ground floor flat. About £665,000 (John D. Wood, 0171-352 1484)



£650,000

GLOUCESTERSHIRE
Ferney Hill, Dursley. Refurbished Grade II listed Georgian house in seven acres of landscaped gardens/paddocks. Six bedrooms, dressing room, four bathrooms, studio, drawing room, octagonal sitting room, three further reception rooms, billiard room and kitchen. Plus self-contained one-bedroom flat. Stone-built former donkey house and garaging. About £650,000 (Butler Sherborn, 01686 505105)



£695,000

BEDFORDSHIRE
Houghton Park House, Ampthill. 19th-century house in 17 acres of parkland and paddocks, next to the ruins of the historic Grade I listed Houghton House, a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Six bedrooms, bathroom, shower-room, spa bathroom/sauna, drawing room, dining room, sitting room, conservatory, kitchen/breakfast room, utility and fitness room. Plus self-contained one-bedroom flat. Double garage and stabling. About £695,000 (Savills, 01223 322955)

CHERYL TAYLOR

هكذا من الاصل

هكذا من الاصل

Grandpa retires to the poolside

The new age of luxurious, purpose-built retirement homes is here

COLIN PHILP

The Mytchett Heath development of retirement homes by English Courtyard near Camberley, Surrey, has won an award for its landscaping

By this time next year a *new development* should be completed at Christ's Hospital school near Horsham in West Sussex. It will be for retired people: 30 flats and houses are being built on the site of the school's old farm by English Courtyard, one of the pioneers of private retirement homes in this country.

Those who move in will have access to the school's theatre and sports centre, as well as having a mini-bus to take them to shops and other local amenities. Laundry rooms, closed-circuit security cameras and guest suites are standard in English Courtyard schemes.

At Cedars Village in Hertfordshire, a ballroom, croquet lawn, restaurant and bar, library, shop and snooker room will be on offer within 22 acres of landscaped grounds. This "village" development is due to be completed by Retirement Villages at Chorleywood in the spring. There will be 151 properties in all, including apartments (from £97,500), cottages (from £140,000) and bungalows (from £160,000). Cedars Village is tailored for the active but residents must be 60 or over.

At Bluecoat Pond, the Christ's Hospital development, prices go from £175,000 to £220,000 and 17 of the two and three-bedroom homes have already been reserved. As at English Courtyard's other developments, there will be a manager on site and residents are issued with small mobile alarms. Occupants can expect to pay about £40 a week management charges, the money going towards general maintenance of the buildings and grounds, the manager's *salary* and a "sinking fund" to cover repair work.

NEWSTEAM

Norman and Jean Boot did a part-exchange scheme

"Our homes are designed so people can grow old gracefully and with independence long after they might have had to leave a large house," says Christopher Thornhill, managing director of English Courtyard. The company has built 600 homes in some 23 developments over the past 19 years.

A scheme at Mytchett Heath, near Camberley in Surrey, won a gold award in November for its landscaping. Prices for six cottages and one flat, which are still available out of a development of 31, are from £175,000 to £200,000. One resident described the place as "quite excellent, well planned and with beautiful grounds". Wide interior doorways and spacious cupboards are other features.

English Courtyard also plans 15 houses and eight flats at Girton, near Cambridge, and 15 houses and four flats at Goodworth Clatford, near Andover. The cost of homes in both places should start at about £180,000.

Howard Packman, managing director of Sheltered Housing Services, an independent *national marketing company* for retirement homes, says *planning restrictions* generally stipulate that single residents, *or one of a couple*, have to be at least 55-60. When the property *is sold on it must* go to people in a *similar* age *group. Most are leasehold.*

Sheltered Housing Services has *200* resales and *129* new schemes (with between six to *40* homes) on its books. *Prices* range from £25,000 to £275,000. Most have one or two bedrooms. SHS issues a quarterly magazine, called *The National Guide to Retirement Homes*, which gives details of available properties.

"These homes usually have non-slip floors in the kitchen and bathroom, easy-to-open windows, easy-to-use water taps, grips on the bath and power points at a convenient height. All will have some kind of alarm system," Mr Packman says.

The security of 24-hour medical facilities on site was a big attraction for Patricia Brooks *when she paid £78,000* for a two-bedroom bungalow on *Oaklands Park*, a *16-acre* estate owned and managed by *Nuffield Health Care, just* outside Redhill in Surrey. Mrs *Brooks has a rheumatic condi*tion but Oaklands Park has a *35-bed nursing home available* for use by those on the estate *and people outside. All 113* freehold properties on the site — bungalows, cottages and flats — have a Lifeline emergency *call* system linked to the medical centre.

Other specialist developers in retirement housing include Pegasus, Beechcroft and McCarthy & Stone. The latter has one and two-bedroom flats for sale at 55 developments. Apart from the smallest schemes, all have resident house managers. Prices are from £40,000 to £100,000 at these established developments, but a new one at Sherborne in Dorset has 16 cottage-style stone houses with three bedrooms from £145,000. Service charges here, including *ground rent*, will be £11 a week.

> 'These homes have non-slip floors, easy-to-open windows, easy-to-use taps and power points at a convenient height'

*An arched cloister incorpor*ated into the buildings sur*rounds a formal garden on* three sides and there are *electronically controlled* entrance gates and a closed-*circuit* television system. The company has found that security is a big plus when people are looking for purpose-built retirement homes.

Another attraction has been a part-exchange scheme. "The scheme helped to oil the wheels in a slow-moving housing market, but even with the market picking up it is still very popular," Mr Davies says.

One couple who took advantage of this scheme was Nor*man and Jean Boot, who* moved from a bungalow in *Birmingham to an apartment* in Worcester.

"We came to look at the property in the middle of May, *although we weren't intending* to buy it. But Norman was so *taken with it that by the end of* the month we had completed. We moved in three weeks later, doing part-exchange because we didn't want all the stresses and strains of selling ourselves," Mrs Boot says.

The couple paid more than £50,000 for the ground-floor apartment which has one bedroom, a lounge, bathroom and kitchen with a garden and stream outside. There is a Careline 24-hour emergency call system and a manager and his wife on site. The service charge is about £22 a week, which includes the ground rent.

"The apartment is warm, comfortable and secure, and that's very important to us," Mrs Boot says.

The couple's flat is one of 54 in the scheme and 31 are occupied. One and two-bed*room flats are still for* sale from £48,450 to £69,450.

Howard Packman says the average-sized private retire*ment development has* 35-40 homes but he believes schemes are getting bigger. "Their great advantage is the peace of mind they bring. They're secure, the maintenance of the building and communal grounds is taken care of, there are no noisy parties and no noisy youngsters. Most people wish they had moved in five years before they did."

CHRISTIAN DYMOND

● *English Courtyard, 0171-937 4511; McCarthy & Stone, 01202 292480; Sheltered Housing Services, 0181-997 9313; Cedars Village sales office, 01923 491170; Beechcroft, 01491 834975; Pegasus, 01242 576610; Nuffield Care Centre, 01737 772525.*

PROPERTY NEWS

■ THE number of houses put up for sale fell by 40 per cent between October and December 1996, the lowest for eight years, says the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors.

■ FIVE British Rail crossing cottages in Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Lincolnshire will be auctioned on February 6. Guide prices start at about £10,000. More information from Savills on 0115-955 2255.

■ MORE than 25 per cent of sales in December were to first-time buyers, says the National Association of Estate Agents, and 25 per cent of all buyers did not require mortgages.

AMANDA LOOSE

KENSINGTON COURT GARDENS, W8 Lease to 2030 £595,000
With elegant, high ceilinged reception rooms facing west, a bright flat on the 2nd flr of a smart, well-run mansion block. 3/4 beds, 2 baths, 2/3 receptions, kitchen, lift, porter.
KENSINGTON: 0171-727 0705

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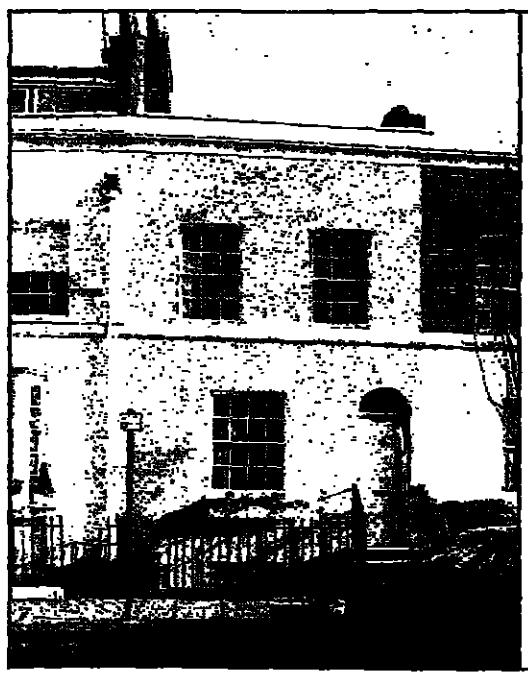
LONDON AND COUNTRY ESTATE AGENTS ESTABLISHED 1872

HAMPSHIRE - Appleshaw, Near Andover Price Guide: £245,000
With lovely gdns, an enchanting mellow house circa 1720, beautifully presented, in a conservation area overlooking the village green & paddocks. 4 beds, bath, shwr/clkrm, 2 receps, kit, garage.
WINCHESTER: 01962 863131

OXFORDSHIRE – Charney Bassett Price Guide: £295,000
An early 18th century stone barn conversion on the village edge. 4 beds, 2 baths, attic rm, recep hall, clkrm, 3 receps, kit, utility, 3-bay open-fronted bldng, gdns. About 0.2 ha (0.5 acre).
OXFORD: 01865 311522



MARKHAM STREET
Chelsea, SW3

In a pretty street between Sloane Square and Chelsea Green, an unmodernised period house with the possibility of an additional floor subject *to the necessary* consents.

2 bedrooms, bathroom, 2 reception rooms, kitchen, garden.

Freehold
£485,000

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ST JOHN'S WOOD:	0171-722 5556	OXFORD	01865 311522
WANDSWORTH:	0181-871 3033	WINCHESTER:	01962 863131
WIMBLEDON:	*0181-944 7172*	*HONG KONG:*	*00 852 2 872 5146*

26 CURZON STREET, LONDON W1Y 8LD
0171-493 4106 FAX: 0171-629 6071

LETTINGS AND MANAGEMENT
To let your house or flat: Central London 0171-491 4311
North London 0171-722 3336 Wimbledon & Surrey 0181-946 9447
South of the M4 01256 398004 North of the M4 01865 311522

ROYAL VICTORIA PATRIOTIC BUILDING
Wandsworth, SW18

In this famous building on the edge of the Common, a beautifully presented first floor flat with double aspect views from the drawing room and bedroom.

Bedroom, bathroom, reception room, kitchen, caretaker.

Lease to 2087
£140,000

WANDSWORTH:
0181-871 3033

ST JOHN'S WOOD, NW8

An exciting and unusual interior lies *behind the plain* elevation of this new house in a gated, cobbled mews. 3 beds, 2 baths, reception, kitchen, patio garden, garage.

Freehold
£395,000

ST JOHN'S WOOD:
0171-722 5556

WIMBLEDON, SW19 Freehold £425,000
A well presented neo-Georgian house in a cul-de-sac off Arthur Road, convenient for Wimbledon Park tube station. 5 beds, 2 baths, 3 receps, kit, utility, clkrm, dble garage, parking, west facing gdn.
WIMBLEDON: 0181-944 7172

HAMPSHIRE
Near Lymington

A charming, attractively modernised cottage with delightful views to the south. 3 bedrooms, bathroom, 2 receptions, kitchen, workshop/utility rm, garden, garage. *Just under 0.1 ha* (0.25 acre).

Offers invited for the freehold

LYMINGTON:
01590 677233

PROPERTY

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0171 481 4000 (PRIVATE)
FAX: 0171 782 7828/0171 782 7799

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NORTH OF THE THAMES

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BAYSWATER RD, W2 In superior fully portered Caroline House raised grnd rear flat of good quality, 3 beds, bth, shwr rm, guest wc. 70 yrs. £242,000. Central Estates 0171 224 3993

HOLLAND PARK New built house 3 bed, 2 bath, lounge, garage, F/H. £295,000. 0171 724 9919

LITTLE VENICE/Maida Vale. The specialist local agents. Vickers & Co 0171 289 1692

MAIDA VALE W9 Rarely avail F/H period property converted into 5 flats nr Little Venice. Ideal investment opportunity. £695k Sandfords 0171 723 9988

PALACE COURT, W2 Spacious 1st flr balcony flt in mod block close Kens Gdns, good condition, 1/2 rec, 3/4 beds, 2 baths, shwr rm, fitted kitch, 75 yrs. £395,000. Central Estates 0171 224 3993

MARBLE ARCH, W1 Immaculate 3 bed 2 bath 4th floor flat in small luxury modern block with underground parking. £240,000 70 yr lse Westbourne Estates 0171 727 8612.

QUEENSGATE SW7 New refurb 2 bed flat in prd bldg £239,500 Westways 0171 792 2167

REPOSSESSIONS The Building Society Repossessions List. 1200+ flats and houses in London and the Home Counties 3 month subscription £59 BSRL 0181 262 7788

ST JOHNS WOOD, NW8. Spacious 3 bed, 2 bath flat in prime portered blk, nr tube. £275,000 Sandfords 0171 723 9988.

ST JOHNS WOOD, NW8. Excellent 1 bed flat with patio & OSP. Opp. Regents Pk. £135,000 Sandfords 0171 723 9988

W1 Mews flt. 3 bed, 2 bath, clkrm, lnge, dining, terr, gge. L/H £360,000. 0171 724 9919

WESTBOURNE TERR, W2 Immac 2 bed 2 bath flat in elegant period conv bldg. £249,950 Westways 0171 792 2167.

W14 O'looks Queens Club super 1 bed flat. Lge balc. £125,000 Squires 0171 381 3553

ST. JOHN'S WOOD (off Avenue Road)
Newly refurb'd bright 3/F flat(with lift) in excl. portered block nr Regents Prk with views over Primrose Hill. 2 beds, 2 baths(1 e/s) mod f/equip kitchen, big windows, terr, garage, store room, low outgoings
Share of freehold £269,950
Private Sale (No Agents)
Tel. 0171 221 8483 or 0976 887953(Madeleine)

SOUTH OF THE THAMES

BARNES Unmod flat Avondale Rd. Auction sale 18 Feb Andrews & Robertson 0171 703 2662

SOUTH OF THE THAMES

PRINCE OF WALES DRIVE
Fully refurb, 1st floor balcony flat, overlooking park. Dining, recep, 3 beds, large southfacing kitchen, wooden flrs, fireplaces.
Long lease + share of F.hold.
£335,000.
Call owner on 0171-622-7299.

BELGRAVIA

BELGRAVE PLACE SW1. A bright one bedroom apartment occupying the entire 2nd floor of a prominent corner building between Eaton Sq and Belgrave Sq. Reception room, Bedroom, Kitchen, Bathroom, 21 year lease £248,000 (subject to contract) Sole agents Lassmans 499 3434.

SW1
Spectacular property in exclusive, quiet Belgrave Mews. Approx 3000sq ft on 2 floors: Garage, cap, large drawing room, kitchen/breakfast room, guest cloakrm. 1st floor: 4 double bedrooms(2 en suite), bathroom. 2nd floor: Large attic+studio or 5th bedroom. 75 year lease.
£1,100,000
Please call office hours 10-6pm
0171 589 4836

CITY & WEST END

WC1 New development flat 2 bed 2 bath, gnd & lwr grd. GCH, own ent 999 year lease £200,000 Banbury & Ball 0171 833 4466

WC1 Studio flt Gnd flr, portr mans blk, sep kit, 79 yr lse. £52,950 Banbury & Ball 0171 833 4466

SPITTALFIELDS LIVE/WORK
c 1,500sqft loft plus 1,000 sqft studio in lovely building in gritty area, 100 yards from Spitalfields. c£150,000 + c£100,000 conversion costs.
Tel: Dudley 0171 376 3311

GREAT INVESTMENT SITUATION
Within walking distance of the City. 2 bed brand new flat adjacent to St Katherine's Dock & Tower Bridge.
Ideal situation for many.
Priced to sell at £140,000
0171 680 0222.

DOCKLANDS

NARROW STREET 2 Bedroom split level Apt overlooking Thames, kitchen [illegible], 2 balconies and garage. £210,000. LH. Tel: 0171 480 6815.

WAPPING HIGH STREET Two bedroom apartment overlooking Thames, wood floors, balcony. Two parking spaces, £189,995. Tel: 0171 480 6815.

FULHAM

FULHAM Ground flr gdn flat, 2 bed, recep, bathroom, sep wc, fitted kitchen, gch. £128,500. Tel: 0171 385 9246(eves).

KENSINGTON & CHELSEA

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W8 1st floor spacious studio flat, high ceilings & balcony, sep kit & bath L/H £169,500. Aaron & Lewis 0171 244 9911 (t) 0171 244 9838 (f)

SLOANE SQUARE
Elegant, spacious 1 bedroom 3rd floor flat with award winning communal gardens. New fitted kitchen.
Leasehold.
£185,000
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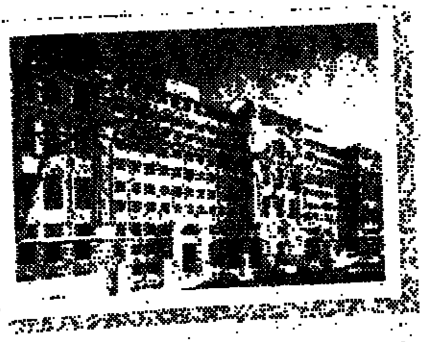

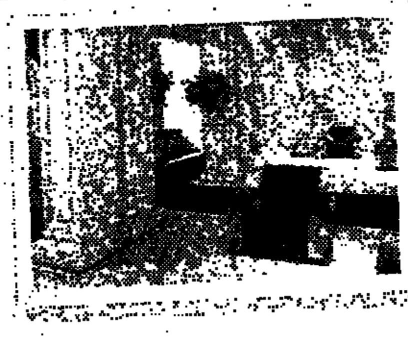

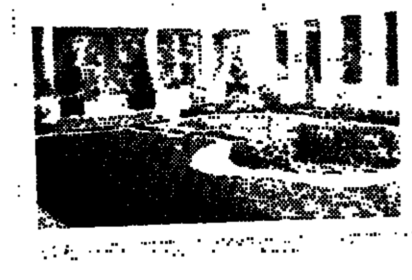

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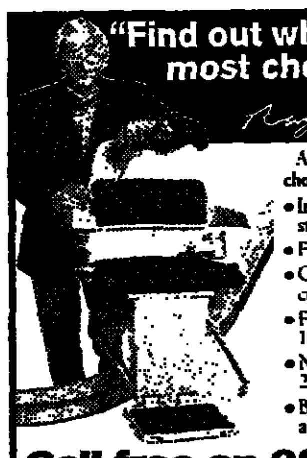

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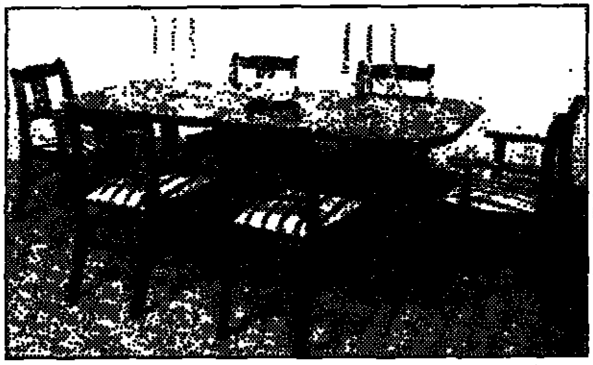

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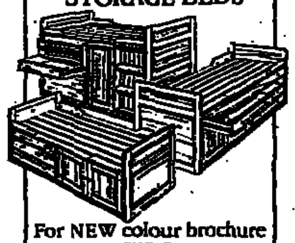

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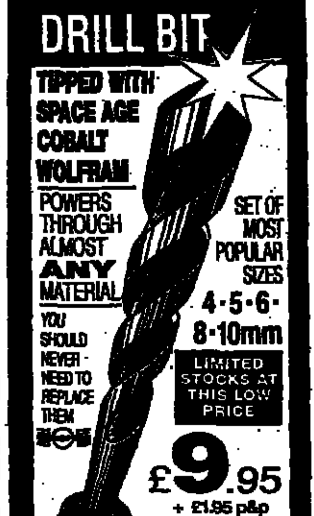

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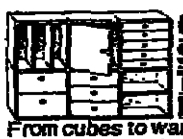

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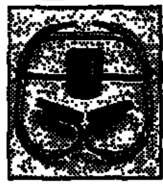

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The secret is out! Stomach muscles need abdominal exercises. Effective results require perfect bodily alignment from the head, neck, shoulders, trunk and chest. Experts maintain that unless this alignment is achieved then exercising can be pointless. Moreover, gym sessions generally include lifting weights equivalent to one third of body weight. On average, this represents between 20 and 25 kilos every lift (weight of the head, shoulders, arms and trunk). 50 lifts therefore is the equivalent to lifting a staggering 1000 to 1500 kilos.

For super athletes this may be acceptable but for most of us, particularly women this form of exercise is unrealistic and may cause cramps, pains, aches and strains and for many of us it's so hard and tiring that we usually give up before any results can be seen.

Power Roller targets exercises precisely to your abdominals

The desire particularly by women to be able to achieve a flat stomach without also creating undesirable muscular chest, arms and legs led American fitness professors to develop Power Roller. This specialist abdominal machine has been designed to concentrate all exercises on the stomach muscles without strain to the neck, shoulders and back. Power Roller has been tested by American aerobic and fitness stars (men and women) with extraordinary results. Power Roller has recently been made available to the U.S. public who have purchased thousands of these precision machines. In addition, the back is held firm during exercise and effects on the lower back muscles is that of gentle strengthening.

Virtually instantaneous results without major effort

Thanks to its specially researched anatomical design achieving precisely targeted exercises, Power Roller enables you to achieve twice the amount of exercise to the stomach muscles in half the time of conventional lifts - with less effort, less risk of strain and no expensive inconvenient gym sessions. Simply follow our specially formulated gentle exercise regime which takes just 4 minutes a day to give all your abdominals a really good work out and start to see the benefits in days.

Recover that trim, slim, waistline in just 30 days

Each of the 4 specially researched Power Roller *routine's take just 1 minute to complete. So you* need only 4 minutes per day to get all your stomach muscles working. Results are almost instantaneously visible. Within days you will see that you are regaining a great flat stomach and within 30 days your abdominals will be firm, your waist trim and love handles gone. A toned slimmer looking you with little effort, no dieting, no aches and strains AND ALL THANKS TO YOUR POWER ROLLER. And you'll feel better and slimmer all over.

Cervical design padded headrest supports head, neck and shoulders helping to eliminate fatigue.
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Anatomically designed Power Roller ensures perfect body alignment to minimise effort and eliminate strain.
Specially developed exercise regime targets and concentrates 100% on lower abdominals, upper abdominals and love handles.

POWER ROLLER - THE BENEFITS

The Power Roller is an exercise machine for people at all levels of the fitness cycle. Regular exercise has been found to help in the following areas:-
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Quality construction - easily stored

Power Roller is constructed from the highest quality steel combining strength with lightness for ease of use. Easily assembled and dismantled for convenience. Padded headrest, armrests and rails for comfort and stability.

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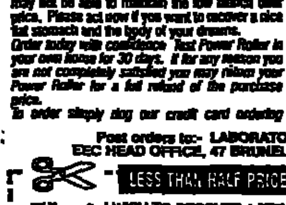

Transform that flabby waistline
Firm up loose muscles and regain a flat firm waistline and recover your hour glass figure

Power Roller Less Than Half Price Launch Offer

The manufacturers recommended U.K. selling price is £79.99. Laboratoire Medosan have negotiated an initial consignment to be offered to readers of this publication for only £29.99 plus p&p - that's less than half the manufacturers recommended price.

Power Roller 30 day no risk trial

Power Roller is now available for the first time in the U.K. and is only available by mail order to those responding promptly to this promotion. Orders will be accepted strictly in rotation. We are expecting the demand for this new product to be exceptionally high - the sooner we receive your reservation the quicker delivery can be made. Only original coupons may be used - photocopies are unacceptable. Further deliveries are uncertain due to the demand in the U.S.A. and Europe and we may not be able to maintain the low launch offer price. Please act now if you want to recover a nice flat stomach and the body of your dreams.

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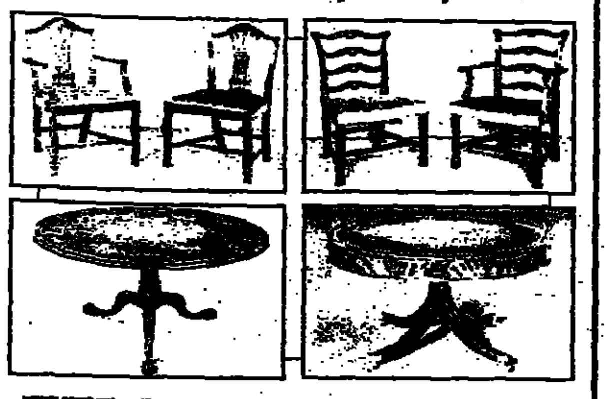

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Every year thousands of new books or revised editions are published. Likewise, there are currently thousands of weekly, monthly, bimonthly and speciality journals.

Every one of these books, periodicals and journals *must be proofread* at one stage or another. Add the millions of printed matter produced by local printers every week and you begin to appreciate the vast size of the proofreading industry needed to support them.

Trevor Horwood has been a freelance writer and copy editor for many years. He works for number of major publishing firms.

Recently some of his clients told him of the difficulty they experienced finding proofreaders. As we all know, the quantity of books published is growing all the time – so there is an ever increasing demand for proofreaders and copy editors. Trevor knows from us that freelancers can play an increasingly important role. Publishers agree that this is the most cost-effective and efficient way of getting services they need at greatly reduced overhead costs. The proofreader is still very well paid, so everyone gains!

After talking to his friends in the business he decided, based on his own knowledge, to produce a guide for people who would enjoy this work. Trevor says, "This service is readily operated from home so it does not involve costly overhead. Ready money is easily produced to help with household bills and pay for extra holidays." You can easily find yourself earning a good hourly rate just for reading and correcting a small piece of copy.

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For a cricket lover:

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For a golf lover:

Anyone who likes golf will love **The Man Who Inherited a Golf Course**. This superb novel tells the story of Trevor Dukinfield who wakes up one morning to find that he is the owner of his very own golf club - fairways, bunkers, clubhouse and all. There's one snag: to keep the club he must win a golf match. And he's never played a round of golf in his life. "The scenario is tailor made for Vernon Coleman's light and amusing anecdotes about country life and pursuits" said the Sunday Independent. "Very readable!" said Golf World. "Hugely enjoyable in the best tradition of British comic writing" said the Evening Chronicle. "The mix of anecdotes and moments of sheer farce make for an absorbing read" said the Evening Telegraph. A terrific present for anyone who enjoys golf. Far more fun than another pair of socks or a bottle of aftershave.

For a cat lover:

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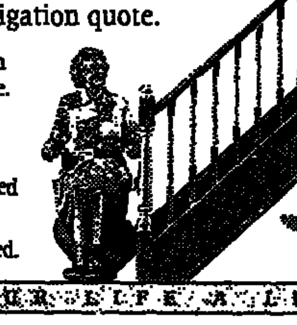

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My barber, my friend

In a hectic world, the hairdressers is one of the few places for a good chat

As I discovered only recently to my great sorrow, Giorgio is dead. He died last year on St George's Day, fittingly for an Italian who loved England with a full heart. He was 80.

Giorgio was not a hairdresser. He hated the word too much for me to describe him as one, and I understood his reasons. He was — as he said himself, pronouncing the word with traces of both his native Parma and his adoptive London — a barber.

Giorgio Polledri was my barber, the best cutter of my hair I have ever had. He worked at Cuts, a scruffy, friendly, bustling place in Frith Street, Soho. His colleagues were definitely not barbers, but hairdressers, stylists, shapers, crimpers and dyers. Well into his seventies when he came out of retirement to join the "salon", Giorgio regarded these youthful snippers with an impressive tolerance. They, too, put up with the reek of his roll-ups, which he lit after each haircut.

His death is a personal loss. A good barber can often become a sensitive man's friend, and Giorgio had become mine. "The usual cut, sir?" he would ask — always "sir" — as he encircled me with a fresh white barber's bib. "The usual, Signor Giorgio," I would say — always "signor" — as I sank into the blissful world of barber sounds.

Out came the clipper. Whirr, like the buzz of bumblebees. Then came the scissors. Clip-clip-clip. And all the while, as the hair fell, Giorgio and I talked of many things.

Men say things to their barbers which they could not say to others of comparable professional contact. One talks a bit to taxi drivers, plumbers and barmaids, not to mention butchers, but today's high-speed life makes this contact too fleeting for a meaningful exchange of views. With barbers, things are different. There is time to talk, even of personal things. I remember an early encounter, in December 1993. I had just arrived in London and was contemplating the step that most frightens those people who are bad with money. "I am thinking of buying a flat, Signor Giorgio. Where would you suggest?" He said nothing for a minute. Then this: "You're with *The Times*, you said? Wapping, isn't it? Hmm. Buy in Islington. Good properties, not bad prices, and you can get to work quickly." Two weeks later, I bought in Islington.

I found Giorgio by chance and stayed with him for three years, plonking myself in his chair every two months or so. Before him, I had been promiscuous, ducking into any barbers that looked as if it offered haircuts by older men rather than younger women. I was seldom happy with my hair, but developed a cavalier approach to the whole business as a way of living with a sloppy coiffure. "Well, that wasn't too awful," I would say to myself after yet another daft haircut. "It will grow back."

My best haircuts before Giorgio date back to my first term as an undergraduate. I had wandered into Walter's in in Oxford, on the recommendation of a friend. "What are you reading, sir?" the old barber asked me, as he sawed at my hair with oldish scissors. "Law," I replied, tentatively. "Ah, that's good," he said. "That's what we need, sir . . . a bit of law and order!" He gave me splendid haircuts before he retired, his skills still as sharp as his homilies.

Giorgio, however, was different. As with all the finest barbers, there was no bombast in him. Instead, he was a quiet, friendly shrink. He could guess when I was gloomy. He could divine when my awful love life was even poorer than usual. Yet in keeping with the finest traditions of his ilk, he did not dispense advice. He never told me to find another girlfriend, or to look for another job. His task was simply to cut hair, and to soothe the man in the chair. "Ah, it will pass, I'm sure" was his stock response to every ailment. And Giorgio was right: it always did.

Typically, our relationship was an uneven one. Men talk freely to their barbers (often losing their sense of proportion in the process), but barbers seldom talk as freely to their customers. What do I know about Giorgio today? Very little, I must confess. He was happily married, proud of his children and grandchildren, loved pasta with "a nice, rich tomato sauce", and even ate Indian food occasionally.

Only once did he speak to me, unprompted, of his own life. One day, when the shop was quiet, he told me that he had been interned in the Second World War as an enemy alien. "I suppose they had to do it. They were fighting against Italy after all, and I was Italian."

He was interned on an island whose name I now forget. "The guards were jealous of our food. We grew tomatoes and garlic and herbs, and our kitchens smelled beautiful. We gave the guards stuff to eat in exchange for cigarettes."

In a quiet, compelling way, Giorgio became a presence in my life. When *The Times* sent me to Spain in April last year, as correspondent, one of the last things I did was go to Giorgio for a haircut. "Make it a good one, Signor Giorgio," I said. "This one's got to last me until I see you next."

When I returned to London in December, I made straight for Cuts, only to find that Giorgio was not there. "He died last April," said a girl. "Did you know him? He was a sweet old man, and a better barber than any of us."

TUNKU VARADARAJAN

TIM O'SULLIVAN

Giorgio Polledri at Cuts in Soho: a quiet, friendly shrink who could divine when his customers had something on their mind

A VET WRITES

Q **What is hip dysplasia? We are looking for a retriever puppy and keep hearing about X-rays, control schemes and hip scores. What is it all about?**

A Hip dysplasia is a badly formed hip joint. The socket in the pelvis is shallow or misshapen and the head of the femur (the ball) doesn't fit snugly into it. An extreme misfit means the hip is permanently dislocated. A minor malformation causes arthritis later in life. Inheritance is a major factor.

The British Veterinary Association/Kennel Club hip dysplasia control scheme aims to identify dogs with the best hips. Their puppies will probably have good hips too. It is not a 100 per cent guarantee but breeders who have used the scheme over the past 20 years have improved their dogs' hips — and their dogs' enjoyment of life.

X-rays of a dog's hips are sent to expert scrutineers to be graded. The lower the score, the better the hip. It is best to see several litters before you choose a pup — and look for low scoring parents. If you are undecided, ask a vet for advice. They cannot make up your mind but can point you in the right direction.

Q **I have an elderly aunt who is animal and vet mad. She has every book about vets I can find — and can recite large sections of the Herriott books. It is her birthday soon. Is there anything she may have missed?**

A *The Vet Aid Book of Veterinary Anecdotes* might fit the bill. Vet Aid was established in 1989 to improve the health and productivity of livestock in developing countries.

James Wright writes about his father, Alf Wright, alias James Herriott. There are tales of veterinary disasters, delightful and difficult clients and history to show how we have progressed in 50 years. It costs £9.50 from bookshops, or by post (add £2.50 p&p) from S. Wellfare, Seascape, 34 Firle Road, North Lancing, West Sussex BN15 ONZ. All profits to Vet Aid (charity no SC 004913).

JAMES ALLCOCK

- *Readers should write to The Times Vet, Weekend, The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. Advice is offered without legal responsibility.*

STEVE PEAKE

Ted and Pamela Roe take their llamas for regular walks

Outstanding in their field

Llamas are cheap to keep and make excellent pets. They also keep foxes at bay

Ted Roe's Christmas gift from his wife Pamela two years ago was a male llama. "It was a complete surprise," he says, and he was delighted.

"The real shock came when I told him he could buy me a female llama for my birthday," Mrs Roe says, "but that it would cost three times more than the male."

Until the new llama arrived, the couple borrowed two sheep from a farmer next door so their one-year-old male had some company.

The two animals, Rodrigo and Rosa, live in a one-acre field beside the Roes' bungalow in Caenarvon. They have produced one offspring, Rosanna, and another is expected in March. The gestation period is more than 11 months.

Mrs Roe was inspired to keep llamas after reading Ruth Ruck's book *Along Came a Llama*, which charts the author's experience of keeping one on a hill farm in Snowdonia. "When I read it I thought I'm going to live in north Wales, have a llama and collect my pension with it," she says.

"They're lovely creatures to have around; placid, haughty but friendly, inquisitive, clean and interesting to watch. Every morning we stand by the fence and they come over and stick their faces into ours." The Roes regularly take the llamas for walks around the local lanes.

The llamas are cheap to keep. They eat grass, get £30 worth of hay a year and a pony mix, which costs about £4 a month. Their dung provides manure.

The llamas have a barn but the cold does not bother them, because they come from high altitude in the Andes. Rodrigo apparently likes nothing better than sleeping out under the stars on a frosty night.

The British Camelids Owners and Breeders Association says there has been a steady increase in the number of people keeping llamas — today about 500 are kept as pets, whereas ten years ago there were only about 100. The word "camelids" covers llamas, vicunas, alpacas and guanacos.

"It is the llamas' enormous curiosity and wonderful big eyes which attracts me so much," says the association's secretary, Candy Midworth, who started off with a male and two pregnant females eight years ago with the idea of breeding and selling but has found every excuse not to part with any of them. She now has 36 and, because llamas live for 20 to 25 years, that figure could rise considerably.

"They are very interactive creatures. Whenever there is a birth they all gather around and watch. Last year a mother had a weak baby which didn't know how to take milk from her. I tried to point the youngster in the right direction but the other llamas nudged the baby towards the mother and got him to drink," Mrs Midworth says.

Paul Rose, a llama breeder, fell in love with the animals while backpacking in Peru 15 years ago. He now has a herd of 60 at his Llama Farm near Stow-on-the-Wold, Gloucestershire, ranging in age from four months to 14 years. He advises not to buy llamas too young. "If they are too young, they will try to establish a pecking order by spitting at you."

Mr Rose's llamas cost about £500 to £600 for a male and £1,500 upwards for a female, the difference in price accounted for by the demand for females for breeding purposes. He emphasises the need for space — two or three to an acre — and says they do not need dipping against disease and need no shearing because after two or three years the coat stops growing. (That is unless people deliberately shear them for their fibre.)

Mr Rose says: "They are best kept with other llamas or stock, such as ponies, sheep — they guard lambs against foxes with great success — cattle or goats. They are even-tempered and good with people. I have even taken one to the pub."

CHRISTIAN DYMOND

- *British Camelids Owners and Breeders Association, Banks Way House, Effingham Common, Leatherhead, Surrey KT24 5JB.*
- *Cotswold LLama Farm, 01451 850682.*
- *Along Came a Llama by Ruth Ruck, from the camelids association (above) £7.95, including p&p.*

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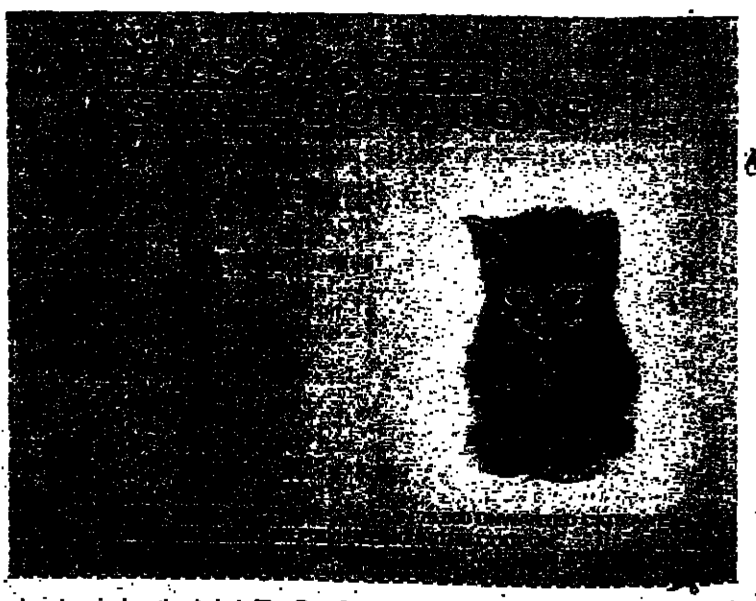

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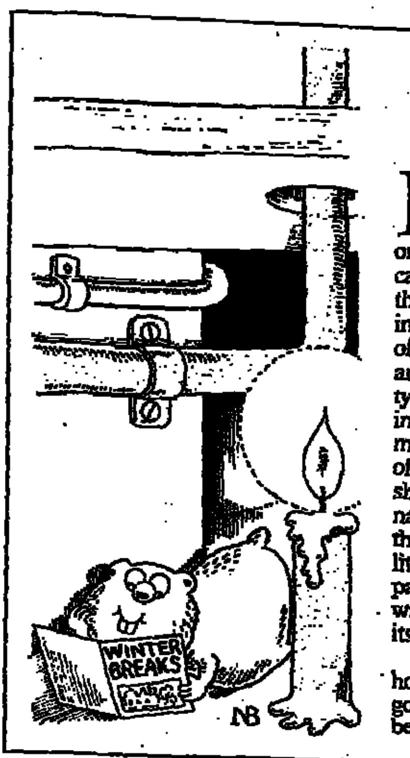

Floored by a dreaded hamster

PERSONAL LIFE

I thought I had cracked the pet problem. I had established a cast-iron case for a total veto on all forms of furry animal. My case, to my two young charges, ran thus: keeping any small mammal in a two-storey flat perched on top of a high Victorian house would amount to nothing less than cruelty. The animal would spend its life in utter misery. (What I really meant, of course, was that in spite of the initial enthusiasm of ownership from both Antonia and Joanna, yours truly would doubtless be the one to find himself clearing cat litter trays, or descending to the park on frozen mornings and walking the delightful puppy for its morning business.)

And then the decider — the holiday problem. Who, pray, is going to look after this sweet little being while you two are summering with Mummy? What I mean here, of course, is that not only are these long vistas of summer vacation a chance for them to spend a really meaningful period with their mother, but that they also present an opportunity for a harassed single-parent father to think about something other than shopping at Sainsbury's, homework, clean knickers, laddered tights, outbreaks of zits and tragic fallings-out with their little schoolmates. In short, they give him a chance to get out there on the beaches of Greece, Turkey or what-have-you, and try to imagine himself as a red-blooded male in whom a member of the opposite sex might be interested.

I must have betrayed something of this last, unworthy desire to Antonia. Also, in what I thought was a successful veto on bringing any furry animal into the flat, I had forgotten that convenient quadruped, the hamster.

Now the hamster, Antonia assures me with some force, obviates all my feeble objections. It does not become mopey like a dog, or plain cantankerous like a cat, if its owners do not give it non-stop TLC. During the summer vacation it — and the small cage which constitutes its entire universe — will be passed around week by week among their friends on strict schedule. "It's all sorted," Joanna tells me. "First Justine, then Rachel, then Emily, then Miriam, then …" she says, pausing to consult the well-thumbed exercise-book page on which this nefarious plan has been hatched.

"Hamsters really don't mind … while you're doing whatever it is you want to do on holiday, *father*," glares Antonia.

When your offspring address you as "father" it is a sure sign that moral turpitude is suspected. I capitulate. A hamster it shall be.

On the first night of their stewardship of the beast I arrive home to find that hamster has escaped through a tiny gap in the skirting board and into the labyrinthine bowels where joists and dust have enjoyed undisturbed repose these past 140 years. Scratchings have been heard under the stairs during the afternoon, but the unrepentant animal has ignored all pleas to show itself.

With none too good a grace I rip up the carpet tiles on the mezzanine landing and prise up floorboards, tearing fingernails in the process. Anxious callings, tearful supplications and much probing with flashlight beams do not, alas, persuade the dratted animal to show itself.

Midnight. It has has now been gone eight hours. Joanna, having studied the metabolism of the pygmy shrew at school that day and learnt that small furry beasts tend to die after four hours without sustenance, now dissolves into tears. I try to persuade her that the hamster is an altogether tougher customer, and suggest bed.

But for the next hour she insists on feeding bits of cheese and bacon rind through cracks in the skirtings in the hope that the wanderer will find them. Somewhere after 1am we sorrowfully disband and go to bed.

Next morning, still no hamster. I go upstairs to find Antonia and Joanna sobbing in each other's arms in a scene of unconsolable grief. I beat a retreat down to the kitchen, muttering about breakfast. Minutes later — whoops of joy. I tear upstairs.

Sitting in the middle of their bedroom floor, looking like the coalman of yore after a particularly dusty delivery, is the beast. How he got there, heaven knows. He looks unrepentant and distinctly well-fed, cheek pouches bulging with lord knows what junk he has picked up in his travels under the floorboards.

Before going to work it takes me two hours to restore the damage I have inflicted on the landing, and I smash my thumb with the hammer en route.

I advise any hamster to give me a wide berth for a long, long time.

PETER DAVIES

What time do you call this?

Jill Parkin on the the problem of setting a curfew for teenagers

JOAN RUSSELL

Angela King with her daughters Andrea, 18, and Sian, 16. "You have to ask yourself why you are making rules. Confrontation can lead to deceit, and that's the danger"

A lot of teenagers will stagger downstairs this morning to breakfast frosties. Not a cereal, but their annoyed parents. They are the Friday night curfew-breakers who were supposed to be home for the bedtime cocoa, but came in with the morning milk.

Like money, sex and music, timekeeping is a big teenage issue. Crudely put, on one side of the breakfast table there is a generation behind the newspaper reading about a world full of drug pushers, sex attackers and drunken teenage drivers. On the other side there are teenagers wondering why they have dinosaurs for parents and what their friends will say about it.

Angela King teaches at Boston Spa comprehensive school in West Yorkshire and regularly discusses parental relationships with her pupils. "Overstrict parents can make their children look foolish. Their peers say, 'Don't they trust you?' And after all, it's a terrible thing to send out a message that the world is such an awful place that you can't go out into it."

She has two teenage daughters whose social life is mainly friends' houses and the local pubs and restaurants of Wetherby, with occasional forays into Leeds or Harrogate.

But she had to take a deep breath when 18-year-old Andrea wanted to go to Liverpool for an 18th birthday party.

"The options were that I could pick her up from the coach at 5am or I could lend her my car. I let her drive. Then I went to bed. She came back at 5.30. It was a case of, 'This scares me, but I'm going to let you do it because we have built up a trust'."

These days trust starts building up early, with sleepover parties from the age of ten. From about 11, Mrs King's daughters sometimes went to the cinema in Harrogate on the bus and came home in a taxi.

Now, as teenagers, the norms for coming home are 11-11.30pm for a weekday, and anything between 11.30pm and 1am at the weekends, unless it is something special. The bottom line, says Mrs King, is that if they are stuck, she will turn out, no matter what the hour.

"You have to ask yourself why you're making this rule or that," she says. "Is it just to exercise my authority? Is it because it was done to me? Confrontation leads to deceit, and that's the danger.

"And I do want my daughters to grow up assertive, to ask for and get what they want. There's no better way of practising it than in the family.

"When they're out, I'm a bit uneasy. You don't quite sleep the same. I don't sit up because it suggests you're not trusting them to make sound friendships and relationships. I want them to feel they're out there with my blessing."

Sian, 16, says: "The curfew is usually midnight on a Friday. If a friend has to be home earlier, we'll walk her back in a group. I would lose Mum's trust if I didn't ring her when arrangements change. It's always the first thing I think of. Yes, I know people who lie about where they are. Some parents — perhaps they have an only child — are very strict. And that's when friends start to lie."

"We arrange lifts and we don't drink and drive," Andrea says. "I know people whose parents are stricter, so I count myself lucky. We can always rely on Mum or Dad. We know that."

But not every house is filled with such sweetness and light. Sheila Dainow, the author of *How To Survive Your Teenagers*, says we shouldn't expect our children to like us all the time, especially when we are limiting their behaviour.

"There is this idea that children should always be happy, that in parenting happiness equals success. It's not true. Of course there's going to be a row. Of course the child is going to stamp about and put on very loud music. Don't expect them to be subtle about it. That's the last thing teenagers are. They're actually very, very predictable.

"You have to make sure children realise you're not someone who is going to go away, that you have your values for a reason.

"They have to rebel in order to see you're right. They must understand that part of being an adult is setting limits to behaviour. Otherwise there's chaos. You have to teach them and then trust them."

What you teach them — about drugs, drink-driving and sex perverts — is part of growing-up. But some parents don't want them to know.

Gael Lindenfield, a psychotherapist and the author of *Confident Children*, says: "The biggest mistake parents make is being over-protective and so pushing their children into secrecy. Innocence is a very dangerous thing. You have to teach them about drugs, about drinking, about personal safety. It's easier to trust them if they're prepared.

"Always know where they are. State your ideal time. Let them state theirs. Give your reasons and listen to theirs. Find out what's workable."

There is a general impression among parents that girls are the vulnerable gender. But as any teenager will tell you, it's the boys who get into most trouble. "Boys can be beaten up for looking at someone the wrong way in the pub. Or their group will be challenged to a fight by another group," Mrs King says.

Cheryl Buggy, who is working on a schools life-skills programme, is the mother of two teenage sons. "There's no hard and fast rule," she says. "Where they are and what they're doing is more important than the time they come in at the weekends. The most important thing is to encourage them not to be victims. And to avoid certain situations — like groups of youths looking for a fight."

Thomas, 16, says: "We know there's a limit. Usually 11.30 at weekends — same as most of our friends. During the week we go to bed around 10.30. It's fine. It's reasonable."

- *Confident Children*, by Gael Lindenfield (Thorsons, £5.99).
- *How to Survive Your Teenagers*, by Sheila Dainow (Sheldon Press, £5.99).

CURFEW TIPS

- When negotiating a time to be home for a teenager, always plan well ahead. Otherwise they will be at the door putting their coats on, saying: "It's Dermot's 17th birthday today. He's driving. We'll probably be back at 3am. Okay?"
- Have a time in mind, which takes into account who they are with and where they are going.
- Ask yourself why you have chosen that particular time.
- Be prepared to compromise if they convince you that it is a special evening and they will be safe.
- Insist that you know where they are going and that they will phone you if their plans change or they get stuck.
- Don't be so heavy-handed that they are frightened to phone when things go wrong.
- If they do catch you on the hop, play what Gael Lindenfield calls the broken record. For example: "Back at 11, please."
"But everyone is seeing the sun come up."
"Back at 11, please."
"But that's psychological abuse."
"Back at 11, please."
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Ruth Gledhill shares the Pioneer movement's weekly meeting and witnesses a Toronto Blessing

Charismatic path to leafy Leatherhead

A LEADER of the Plymouth Brethren was recently overhead saying: "Shame about Gerald Coates. He could have made something of his life if he had not taken up with those charismatics." Mr Coates is a founder and team leader of a network of "new" churches that now numbers 150 worldwide, with 100 in Britain. I found him in the sports hall at the Leatherhead leisure centre in Surrey, where nearly 1,000 worshippers were swinging and swaying to the sound of Christian rock led by Wayne Drain from Arkansas, USA.

Between numbers, Drain read from scripture, interpreted the reading and prophesied, accompanied by meditative background music from the electronic keyboard. At one point, children were invited to the stage to talk about the meaning of Christianity in their lives. All those present involved in education were invited to the front to be prayed over. They promptly fell to the floor, a manifestation said to be of the Holy Spirit and now an accepted feature of the charismatic movement, known as the "Toronto Blessing" because Toronto airport was where it began three years ago. The children prayed over the fallen adults, and the rest of the congregation prayed together. There was more worship and prayer, and the meeting concluded with a "stomping" session to Drain's eclectic rock.

Children pray at the meeting

This meeting of Surrey's "Pioneer People" was the regular gathering of the various local Pioneer churches that worship each Sunday, one getting together in the ABC cinema and others in garages, front rooms and school halls. The movement began in the 1970s, with Mr Coates as one of the first leaders. Today it is one of the fastest-growing sections of the Christian church worldwide.

Mr Coates started life as an Anglican and became a Plymouth Brethren in his teens. One day, several years later, he began to "sing in a strange language". After seeking advice he realised he had been "speaking in tongues", one of the charismatic gifts outlined by St Paul in the New Testament. This came to the attention of the leadership of the Plymouth Brethren, and he and his wife were asked to leave. So they set up Pioneer, with a handful of others, in their living room.

"Our movement is known for understanding relationships," said Drain, after reading a gospel text. Healthy relationships depended on knowing God, loving people and befriending "sinners".

But he warned: "I have seen young evangelists so fired up for the lost that they go out unprepared. The darkness overcomes them and darkens their light. They commit adultery, fall into sexual sin, fall into drugs." Listening intently were a remarkable number of children and teenagers. For these young people, at least, a "high" attributed to the Holy Spirit has to be better than one induced by drugs or alcohol. Maybe that is one reason for this movement's phenomenal success.

- *Pioneer People meet at the ABC Cinema, Esher, on Sundays at 10.15am. For information contact Fax House, 44 High Street, Cobham, Surrey KT11 3EB (01932 865036).*

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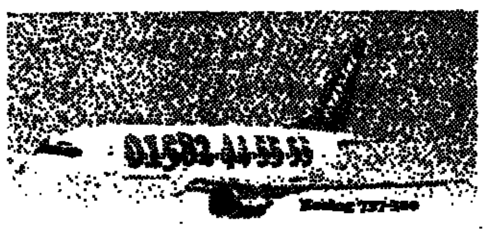

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Travel continues on page 22

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Egypt · 18

THE TIMES travel

Celebrate the Chinese Year of the Ox
Britain · 20

Revelling in the masks and the mystery

SUPER STOCK

Venetians like to disguise themselves for carnival time by wearing costumes and masks or dressing as characters from the Commedia dell'Arte or as plague doctors. Then they pass through the crowds as if they are conventionally dressed

The Baroque and the bizarre rub shoulders happily during carnival time in Venice

We arrived in Venice the day before Shrove Tuesday, the climax of the carnival. At the landing stage for the vaporetto in Piazzale Roma a troupe of clownish *gnaghe* (transvestites) in high wigs and hooped stockings mingled with bourgeois women in coats and men in Barbour jackets. The boat zigzagged through the traffic on the Grand Canal — water-taxis, refuse boats, gondolas with Japanese passengers. It was cold and late in the afternoon; we could see the bright chandeliers of some of the palazzos, and the churches were lighting their candles.

Disembarking at San Silvestro, we walked through the bustling alleys, across the Campo Sant'Aponal, towards our apartment, just off the Campo San Polo, noticing several people wearing the traditional carnival disguise of white mask, black silk hood, lacy cape and three-cornered hat or dressed as characters from the Commedia dell'Arte or as plague doctors with long, beaky noses and canes, all passing through the crowds as if they were quite conventionally dressed.

The ground was strewn with confetti. A reveller with a black-painted face loomed towards us pointing a plastic toy rifle. The Campo San Polo, a wide spacious square, was once used for bull-baiting, religious ceremonies and other public gatherings, particularly during the carnival. I was hoping it would be the venue for a masked ball. Instead, there were dull rock concerts to endure on both Monday and Tuesday nights. Fortunately, the noise ended quite early.

Our apartment, up a blind alley called the Campiello delle Erbe, beside the narrow Sant'Antonio canal, was extraordinarily quiet at night, more like the countryside than the heart of a populous city, which was just as well because my wife and I had our six-week-old son with us.

With a few expensive exceptions, the restaurants of Venice are disappointing, so it was good to have our own kitchen and to shop for our meals at the markets around the Rialto. We inspected ink-splattered cuttlefish, spider crabs and live eels. Then there were baby artichokes and flowering courgettes, and we also found a stall selling, among other kinds, chocolate pasta. In the bakeries were carnival biscuits and meringues of every colour. On the Ruga Rialto a delicatessen called Aliani Gastronomica sells Venetian specialities such as marinated sardines and a creamy, salt-cod paste.

On Tuesday afternoon we strolled along the Dorsoduro to marvel at Longhena's Baroque masterpiece, the Basilica of Santa Maria delle Salute, an octagonal creation of light Istrian stone, crowned with two domes, the larger one buttressed with huge spirals. Over the exterior swarm 125 statues. The Salute, which commemorates the passing of the plague in 1630, took so long to build that Longhena, in his early thirties when he submitted the design, died at 83 a year after its completion.

As we turned the corner at the Dogana, the empty Custom house was at the tip of the Dorsoduro. On the Zattere — the broad quay where timber was once unloaded — a spectral figure in grey rags and a long dishevelled wig shambled past us, his gaunt face powdered with ash. It might have been a costume for the carnival, except that he was picking up cigarette ends from the pavement and muttering in the language of the down-and-out. I thought of Baron Corvo, the eccentric author of *Hadrian the Seventh*, who spent the last years of his unhappy life stranded in Venice, sleeping in a boat belonging to the Bucintoro Rowing Club, whose premises are on the Zattere, scratching a few lire together procuring local boys for visiting homosexuals, practically starving, all the while dressed as the priest he had so longed to become.

At the corner of Rio Trovaso and Rio Ognissanti we saw three wooden chalets around a yard where gondolas are built and repaired. Then we walked to the church of San Nicolo dei Mendicoli, near the maritime station, a strange place where the Virgin wears a red velvet dress.

At the last moment, discouraged by the difficulty of manoeuvring a baby through the crush on the Rialto, we decided to forego the festivities in St Mark's Square. The next morning the square was flooded. Plank bridges extended from the two columns on the waterfront (the Winged Lion of St Mark and St Theodore with his slain alligator) across the Piazzetta to the entrance of the great Basilica and beyond to the expensive emporia of the arcades.

We came across the ancient Jewish quarter of Venice, the original ghetto (*geto* means foundry and until 1390 one operated on the site). In 1516 Jews were allowed to settle in the old foundry area and every night the iron gates of the ghetto were locked. Although Venetian Jewish life was restricted (only certain trades could be followed and distinctive yellow headgear had to be worn), Judaism was tolerated and the population was swelled by refugees from less benign governments.

Of the original nine synagogues in the enclave, only five remain: the Scola Tedesca (for those of German origin), the Scola al Canton (Provençal), the Scola Levantina, the Scola Italiana and the Scola Spagnola. The Baroque interior of the latter was remarkable. It was designed by Longhena and, although not allowed to practise architecture, the Spanish Jews could afford to commission the very best. There is a Jewish old folk's home in the Campo and a kosher grocery.

We took the vaporetto to San Lazzaro, an island close to the Lido, which since 1717 has been an Armenian monastery, founded by Mekhitar (the Consoler). The island is a tidy, well-kept place with terraced gardens and cypress trees.

There are 22 Mekhitarian fathers and one, Father Vertanes, explained that the monks pass their time in prayer and intellectual pursuits, all the menial work being done by lay brethren. Recently there was an Irish cook who was no great hit in the refectory.

We saw the fine library and a curious miscellany of objects: an Egyptian mummy, an Indian throne, 14 ivory balls each one inside another like Russian dolls, a statue of Napoleon's son by Canova and some pieces of Armenian porcelain. It seemed more like a country house than a monastery.

The order has operated its own press since 1789, raising funds by printing booklets and labels. Lord Byron used to row to the island for Armenian lessons. He got on well with the fathers and helped to publish an Armenian-English dictionary.

Byron was always looking for ways to stave off boredom. One day in 1818 he swam from the Lido, across the lagoon and the entire length of the Grand Canal. It took him four hours and 20 minutes.

JOE ROBERTS

● *The author was a guest of International Chapters.*

VENICE FACT FILE

- International Chapters, 102 St John's Wood Terrace, London NW8 6PL (0171-722 9560) is a self-catering specialist offering apartments in Venice from £680 a week.
- Skybus Holidays, 24a Earls Court Road, London SW5 0GA (0171-373 6055) can arrange return flights Gatwick/Venice from £114, plus airport tax.
- Crystal Italy (0181-390 5554) offers two-night breaks at the three-star Hotel Giorgione from £309 per person or one week from £494. Prices include B&B, flights and transfers.
- A three-day vaporetto pass costs £12 and can be purchased at any of the stops.
- The 1997 Venice Carnival runs until February 11. For details, contact the Italian State Tourist Office (0171-408 1254).
- Reading: the Travel Bookshop (0171-229 5260) recommends: *Venice* by Jan Morris (Faber, £9.99, ISBN 0 571 16897 3); *The Passion* by Jeanette Winterson (Penguin, £5.99, ISBN 0 140 10831 9); *Venice for Pleasure* by J.G. Links (Pallas, £9.95, ISBN 1 873 42950 9).

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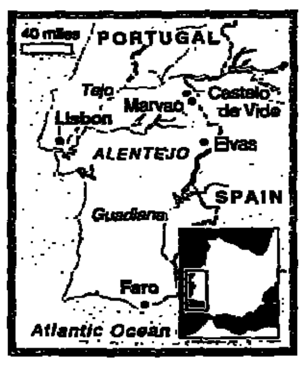
Portugal: A ramble up hill and down dale in the deserted medieval hinterlands of the Alentejo . . .

Walking back to happiness



Castelo de Vide in the Alentejo is a fascinating mid-point stop on the 50-mile ramble. Walkers are guided along farm tracks and bridleways, from the monastery of Flor da Rosa to the citadel of Marvao

In the hot heart of the Alentejo, local people think you are mad to go walking for pleasure — and they have a point. The plain bakes even under the semi-retired sun of late October, the sheltering trees are infrequent, and there are other perfectly adequate means of making your way to the Spanish border. Besides which, they are not used to the sight of pink British pedestrians filing between the hand-tilled fields towards the citadel villages that grow from the ridges.

But if you are one of the walkers you, too, have a point, because there is no better way to make the acquaintance of this medieval hinterland. The Roman infantry came this way and to ape their progress at the end of the next millennium is an enlightened lunacy.

In the British countryside, compulsive walkers delight in routes such as drove roads and ridgeways, where the original thrust and purpose are still evident.

In the Alentejo, this sense is palpable not only on the high ground but also in the unmetalled network of farm tracks and inter-village bridleways. With its compact ranges of hills and sudden shifts of character, this is the kind of small topography you might have found in rural Britain before the railways, canals and toll roads.

Yet the emptiness is overwhelming, as it is in much of inland Portugal. Most of our compatriots have gone to the golf coasts of the Algarve or the bright lights of Lisbon, and a few to the Minho or the Costa Verde. The Alentejo — meaning the land beyond the River Tejo — is far enough from the capital to the west and Seville to the east to have kept it secluded from all but the most single-minded. Gradually, this region, like the wilder Tras-os-Montes and Serra da Estrela, is being discovered by the British walker. Yet the prospect of path erosion by the modern Vibram sole is as distant from here as is the Pennine Way.

The Alentejo was a region of expulsion and counter-expulsion, with the Moors in residence after the Visigoths, and the Christians in the 12th century. After that, the Spaniards themselves were habitual invaders, eager to annexe the land in the manner of Galicia and Catalonia. More recently Wellington was here, about 30 miles to the south at Elvas, where he found the old fortresses still serviceable. And now we are here. 16 Ingleses with bright little daypacks and redundant waterproofs.

Historically, our nations have been on relatively cordial terms. At the Castelo de Vide, mid-point of my 50-mile ramble from the monastery of Flor da Rosa to the citadel of Marvao, the garrison occupied by the Portuguese and English remains in excellent fettle. Immediately within, and just as redundant as the waterproofs, are the walls of the earlier fortress, dating back to 1326.

Behind the folds of this double curtain stands a tiny and perfect medieval town. In one of the streets the houses have been created from the very wall, like man-made caves in a sheer cliff. In another, at the top of the old Jewish quarter, you come across a minute synagogue which was only re-identified as such in 1970. If this were Tuscany, the place would be crawling.

Anglo-Portuguese relations are equally well preserved. As recently as the Falklands conflict we were invoking the 1386 Treaty of Windsor, which pledged support for each other's military actions.

During my week here the only thing that placed pressure on the entente was my attempt to speak Portuguese. My mother was born in Brazil and I grew up trying to decode her exchanges with her sister. It seems I acquired nothing but family patois which is nonsense to everyone else. I shall be complaining.

The trip I joined was one of the first organised by a British operator and while solitude can be one of the most blissful aspects of serious walking, there is a lot to be said for going with someone who knows the mileages by heart and can work out a detour that takes in the prehistoric dolmens.

Walking in this way is not for misanthropists, although this does not mean that misanthropists never take part. That is both the danger and the frisson of joining a randomly convened team of strangers. I was lucky. I got a bunch that included a retired diplomat's wife, an eminent economist, assorted doctors and an 80-year-old metallurgist from Denver, Colorado. This last member was part of a sub-team of veterans, which consisted of three married couples, all of them long-standing friends from the same town. They knew exactly what they were doing — basically ensuring against dud company — and had done it umpteen times before.

The result of such a mixture is more than acceptable. You are strolling towards the Serra, one moment listening to a lucid critique of EU convergence criteria, the next to first-hand tales of Voodoo in Haiti. This may not be living among the local population, but then that is not the idea of this fascinating holiday.

It is five-star tramping, with your luggage being taken by road to the next pousada, and a spread of fresh local produce appearing round the corner by magic just when your thoughts are turning to lunch. The walking is very far from the masochistic variety, but it is not wimpish either: usually between six and 12 miles per day, with a lunchtime opt-out for the tired.

I did hear grim tales of a misanthropist, a professional one by the sound of it, who got drunk every evening before dinner and loudly abused his fellow-travellers. I thought this story very funny but it is hardly everyone's glass of vinho, and I doubt I would be so amused if it had happened to me.

ALAN FRANKS

● *The author was a guest of Alternative Travel.*

ALENTEJO FACT FILE

■ The Alternative Travel Group, 69-71 Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 6PE (01865 513333). The Alto Alentejo trip costs £995 per person and includes airport transfers; tour support vehicle to transport luggage and carry anyone not interested in walking all or part of the day; a tour leader who accompanies the walkers and a tour manager to prepare picnic lunches, organise hotels and restaurants; accommodation, including taxes and service charges; meals, drinks, and entrance charges for any visits that form part of the tour itinerary. Return flights with BA are extra and cost from £180.

■ Reading: *The Portuguese*, by Marion Kaplan (Penguin, £8.99, ISBN 0 140 11352 5); *Portugal Rough Guides* (£9.99, ISBN 1 858 28180 6); *Portugal, A Traveller's Guide*, by Ian Robertson (John Murray, £11.99, ISBN 0 719 55207 9).

Answers from page 25

SCOMFISH

(c) To suffocate, stifle, choke (with heat, smoke, a bad smell). A shortened form of *discomfish*.

"Her stinking breath/ Was just enough to scomfish ane to death."

SMOOR

(a) To smother, in various senses. To be smothered. To conceal or hide, to suppress. From Old English, Dutch, Low German and other Teutonic languages.

"The sheep had been *smoored by scores in the* drifts."

SERAPE

(c) A shawl or plaid worn by Spanish Americans. From the Mexican-Spanish *sarape*.

"I knew that I had seen the last of civilised man under the garb of a Mexican serape."

SKEWBALD

(c) Irregularly marked with white and brown or red, or some similar colour. Properly distinguished from *piebald*, which is sometimes inexactly used for it. A portmanteau of *skewed* and *piebald*.

"A middle-aged gentleman of hermit habits on a skewbald cob."

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A Celebration Performance at the Temple of Queen Hatshepsut at Thebes

AIDA

Guiseppe Verdi never realised his dream of staging Aida in its actual setting. The nearest he came was a performance at the Cairo Opera House in 1871. Now over a 120 years later the Egyptian government have decided to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the discovery of Tutankhamun's Tomb with both a special exhibition of the treasures found and for what promises to be a spectacular presentation of Aida in the idyllic setting of Queen Hatshepsut's Temple at Thebes.

A cast of hundreds includes artists from the Cairo Ballet Company and Symphony Orchestra, a chorus of 300 members, 100s of Egyptian soldiers to take part in the triumphal march, plus many on horseback who will ride up the Processional Way into the temple itself. The five-night itinerary also includes a flight to Cairo and a stay at one of the world's most famous hotels - Mena House which overlooks the Pyramids, for a visit to the Egyptian Museum where on display will be treasures from Tutankhamun's Tomb rarely seen by the public. The visit concludes with a Son et Lumière performance at the Sphinx and Pyramids. This will take place during an 8-day period in October, probably the loveliest month to visit Upper Egypt.

The Programme

Day 1 Depart Gatwick by Air 2000 or Monarch Airways non-stop flight to Luxor. On arrival transfer to the 5-star Nile Diamond which will be our accommodation and our base.

Day 2 Visit the Valley of the Kings at Thebes, containing 62 excavated tombs. Continue to Medinet Habu and the Colossi of Memnon before returning to our vessel.

Day 3 The MS Diamond sets sail in the morning through a timeless Nile scenery to Qena. On arrival make the short drive to Denderah to visit the Temple of Hathor and the Tomb of Osiris. Return to Luxor in the evening.

Day 4 Visit the Temple of Karnak and the Temple of Luxor. In the afternoon relax and enjoy the sights of the Nile as we make a cruise south of Luxor returning in afternoon. After cocktails and canapes travel to Queen Hatshepsut's Temple for the celebration performance of Aida. Afterwards return to the vessel for a Gala Dinner.

Day 5 Fly to Cairo and travel onwards to the Pyramids at Giza and the Hotel Mena House that overlooks them. Visit the Egyptian Museum and the 75th anniversary exhibition displaying the treasures from Tutankhamun's Tomb which are rarely on public view. In the evening attend a Son et Lumière performance in front of the Sphinx and Pyramids.

Day 6 The morning is reserved for independent sightseeing or relaxation in the hotel's grounds. Our special flight leaves Cairo in the evening for the return flight to Gatwick.

A 3 or 5-night visit to Upper Egypt on board the 5-star MS Diamond from £695.00

To be performed by Wilhelmina Fernandez (Aida), Guiseppe Giaccomini (Radames), Bruna Baglioni (Amneris) and directed by Atellio Colonello

The MS Diamond

Recently built the MS Diamond is 11 metres wide and 71.5 metres long with a draft of no more than 90 cms. The two Mantrac engines are state-of-the-art American products. So are the stainless steel kitchens that provide fine dining in the one-sitting, spacious restaurant. Other modern conveniences include air-conditioning, a water purification system, laundry, TVs and private shower rooms and WC with each comfortable cabin. The tinted picture windows of these cabins give passengers a king-sized view of the banks of the Nile and all its splendours. For the energetic there is a swimming pool, exercise equipment and jacuzzi.
NB: subject to demand, supplementary vessels of the same standard will be used.

The Venue - The Temple of Queen Hatshepsut

There is probably no more spectacular and stunning setting for a temple or for that matter an operatic performance than the Mortuary Temple of Queen Hatshepsut. Set against a mountain backdrop, the Temple of Queen Hatshepsut lends itself to being a natural amphitheatre and in its own right is one of the most notable monuments of Egyptian architecture.
Dress: for the performance and Gala Dinner - Black Tie.

Departure Dates & Prices

1997 - per person in a twin cabin/room

October 9 (5 nights)
Opening Night departure - £950.00
(Single supplement £230.00)

October 14 (3 nights)*
Does not visit Cairo - £695.00
(Single supplement £140.00)

October 17 (5 nights)
Final Night departure - £950.00
(Single supplement £230.00)
Upper decks supplement £150.00

Ticket Supplements

Opening Night ticket supplement £35.00. The categories below reflect the perceived value of the different vantage points.

Category A seats - £175.00
Category B seats - £125.00
Category C seats - £50.00

Price inclusions: transportation and visits, room and breakfast at the Mena House, standard 'D' category ticket for the performance of Aida, Gala Dinner, Son et Lumiere at the Pyramids, visit and entrance fees to the Tutankhamun Exhibition, all taxes and visa charges and full board on board the MS Diamond. Not included: travel insurance.

Our current Conditions of Booking (a copy of which is available on request) shall apply to all bookings.

* The 3-night itinerary follows the same programme as the itinerary above except that Day 3 is omitted and passengers fly directly back from Luxor to Gatwick on Day 4. The opera performance is on the evening of 16th October.

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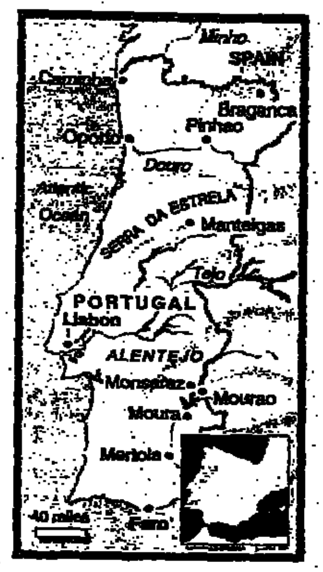
. . . and following the rugged border and craggy fortresses built to fend off the old adversary, Spain

Land of the high frontier

Determinedly pointing our hired car's exhaust pipe towards the beaches and golf links of the Algarve, my wife and I drove out of Faro airport and took the road north to begin our exploration of Portugal's wildest and unspoilt hinterland.

We began by meandering up the languid, muddy west bank of the River Guadiana, looking across the water to the yellow and purple hues of Andalusia, blooming with late May wild flowers on the other side. For nearly 100 kilometres (about 60 miles), the river keeps those old adversaries, Spain and Portugal, apart before swinging inland to let a jagged ridge of mountains take over as the natural border.



At Mertola, the highest navigable point, the river tightens into rocky gorges and rapids. We stopped to explore a castle, the southernmost in a string of defensive fortresses built by the awesome Dom Diniz in the 13th and 14th centuries. Dom Diniz (King Dennis to some) was the colossus of Portuguese history who established the national frontiers which are virtually unchanged today.

We sat on his ramparts, overlooking a wide chasm, and picnicked on ewe's cheese and juicy oranges while black vultures wheeled overhead. Later, exploring the small town, we stumbled on an extraordinary little domed church. "A mosque," my wife said, after finding Arabic inscriptions on the stone columns. Few original Moorish buildings survived the Christian armies' reconquest of the Moors, but arabesque architecture is everywhere.

We struck out across the cork forests which blanket this Alentejo region, kilometres peeling away between villages of domed, whitewashed houses with low arches and lattice chimneys. Ever present in the distance loomed the backbone ridge, rising abruptly from the plains.

We ticked off a couple more of Dom Diniz's craggy castles at Moura and Mourao, both of them looking threateningly across at "o pais vizinho" (the neighbouring country), as Spain is often referred to. We stopped at yet another fortified town, hilltop-crowning Monsaraz, staying at a farmhouse in its shadow.

"Neither good winds nor good marriage come from Spain," Joaquim Almeida, a fellow guest, warned without any apparent hint of irony, repeating an oft-quoted Portuguese proverb. He was a cork dealer, and knew who to blame for the searing easterlies which have brought drought and ruin to many farmers over the years.

From the Alentejo we crossed the fertile flood plain of the Tagus, through rice paddies and pastures grazed by big, black fighting bulls. Then we began to climb into the mountains of the Serra da Estrela, Portugal's highest and most austere range, reaching nearly 6,000ft.

As we twisted our way up to the raw, barren high Serra, stunted trees gave way to scrubby grass and heather strewn with boulders. We drove through a moonscape of weird rock formations, including a realistic-looking natural sculpture known locally as the "Old Man's Head", with a hooked nose and lichen splattered over his bald pate.

We snaked over a pass and dropped into Manteigas, the market town for shepherds and farmers whose flocks and small holdings are scattered over the lower slopes of the Serra. There is a small spa, a neatly tiled church, a proud little town hall and a bandstand.

Next day we set off for a hike over a forested mountain track to the village of Verdelhos. The starting point was a deep rockpool known as Poco do Inferno — Hell's Well — at the foot of a waterfall cascading down from the crags above. Our trail wound through a rather eerie, dark forest. We had been told that somewhere near here — nobody knew quite where — was one of the last remaining wolf dens in the Serra da Estrela.

EMMA LEE

Decorated doorway in Braganca, once a fortress city but now a peaceful backwater

While I was gazing out towards the horizon, my wife suddenly let out a piercing yell. I turned round to see a large, wolf-like beast, its head held low, loping towards us along the track we had just walked. As I bent to pick up a stone, it turned tail and disappeared round the mountainside trail, to re-emerge a few minutes later at the heel of an elderly, toothless goatherd leading his charges, their bells a-jangle.

The goatherd, his dog barking menacingly at the goats to prevent them from straying, told me that these mountain dogs are cross-bred with wolves. He explained, his voice dropping to a conspiratorial whisper as he turned away from my wife, how wolf blood is introduced into the strain: "In winter, a bitch on heat is taken deep into the forest and tied to a tree overnight; then along comes a male wolf and . . ."

The final stage of our journey was to Tras-os-Montes — "Behind the Mountains" — in the far northeast corner. We crossed the Douro via the old iron bridge at Pinhao, then hugged the valley of the Pinhao tributary's winding valley which flattened out into a counterpane of small holdings. Tiny plots of land, often bordered by olive trees, were being worked with ploughs drawn by mules.

Capital of the region is Braganca, a fortress city of once huge strategic importance, fought over by Romans, Visigoths, Moors and Christians. The dukedom of Braganca became the royal house of Portugal, and Catherine of Braganza (English spelling) was Queen Consort to Charles II (of Britain). But we found only an agricultural hub, where illustrious old buildings are faded. Within the city walls, chickens and snotty-nosed infants scratched about. Such is the price of becoming a peaceful backwater.

Making our way to Oporto airport at our journey's end, we followed the Portuguese bank of the River Minho, another natural border with the neighbouring country. We stopped for lunch at Caminha, near the mouth, and had a quick look round the Igreja Matriz fortress-cum-church. Outside, a stone gentleman determinedly points his backside towards Spain.

I wonder whether Dom Diniz would have approved.

MARTIN SYMINGTON

● *The author was a guest of the National Portuguese Tourist Office.*

SERRA DA ESTRELA FACT FILE

■ *Tour operators offering fly-drive packages to Portugal* include Magic of Portugal (0181-741 1181), Mundi Color (0171-828 6021) and Sunvil Holidays (0181-568 4499). For a week-long "open-jaw" fly-drive based on flights into Faro and out of Oporto (or vice versa), car hire and B&B accommodation, expect to pay about £700 to £900 per person, based on two people sharing.

■ Off the beaten track, accommodation can be scarce. The solution generally lies in a combination of pousadas (a network of state-run inns), Turismo de Habitacao (private houses in rural locations offering B&B for about £20 per person per night) and a few independent country hotels. Recommended is the farmhouse-style Horta da Moura (00 351 66 55206) at Monsaraz in the Alentejo, about £49 single, £56 double, including breakfast; and the Quality Inn (00 351 75 313809) located high in the Serra da Estrela, from £37 single, £49 double, with breakfast. The best place to stay in Braganca is the Pousada de Sao Bartolomeu, looking across a valley to the castle (UK central pousada booking number: 0171-402 8182). Single from £25, double from £38, with breakfast.

■ Spring and autumn are the best times for touring. Summers can be extremely hot, especially in Alentejo.

■ Portuguese National Tourist Office, 22-25a Sackville Street, London W1X 1DE (0171-494 1441).

■ Reading: *Serra da Estrela: Recollections of an Excursion to the Monasteries of Alcobaca*, by William Beckford (Centaur, £22, ISBN 0 900 00078 3). *The City and the Mountains*, by Eca de Queiros (Carcanet, £14.95, ISBN 1 857 54102 2). *Lisbon and Central Portugal*, by Brian and Eileen Anderson (A & C Black, £12.99, ISBN 0 713 64147 9).

Fabulous darling but don't have the cod

Admirers of the film *Casablanca* will remember that the one desire of all the political refugees who frequent Rick's Bar is to get to Lisbon. Their aim was to escape the Vichy regime; ours was a less serious one: to escape the great freeze by visiting a city where the winter temperature is 57F.

The first thing that strikes one about Lisbon is the design of its pavements: everywhere tessellated in small black and white marble squares, arranged to give a simple chequerboard effect, an ornate floral pattern, or to spell out the name of a shop or hotel. Made by hand, these are very flattering to the feet, positively encouraging one to walk around the city; and indeed Lisbon, like Amsterdam or Venice, is made for walking — although one shouldn't ignore the temptation to leap occasionally on one of the little yellow toy-like trams that clank up and down its hills.

Down the middle of the city, aimed at the River Tagus, runs Lisbon's Champs Elysées, the Avenida da Liberdade, which culminates in the Baixa, the lower town. Devastated by the earthquake of All Saint's Day 1755, which destroyed Lisbon and killed 15,000 people, the area was rebuilt to the design of the Marques de Pombal in a rectangular grid pattern. Its axis, the Rua Augusta, is the smart shopping centre. It is imposing, monumental urban architecture; especially impressive is Commerce Square, with one side open to the river, and its huge equestrian statue of Jose I. To either side of the Baixa, however, on two steep hills, are two very different districts which suffered far less from the earthquake — the Alfama to the east, and the Bairro Alton, the upper city, to the west.

The Alfama, the oldest district of Lisbon, which still shows its Moorish ancestry, has to be visited on foot: its cobbled streets are hardly wide enough for a bicycle, let alone a car.

As we meandered through the maze of alleys, up and down flights of steps, canaries chirped from the windows overhead; over the wrought-iron balconies of the houses, with their pastel-washed or tiled walls, washing was hung out to dry. Here there was an ancient tiled fountain, there a belvedere with a view over the red roofs and to the River Tagus beyond. The Rua de Sao Pedro is lined with bars, cafés and restaurants, into one of which we turned for lunch.

FACT FILE

■ Crystal Cities (0181-241 5040) offers three nights at the Hotel Lisboa Plaza from £349 per person including return flights, B&B accommodation and transfers.

■ Reading: *Baedeker Guide to Lisbon* (AA, £8.99, ISBN 0 749 51406 X); *Travels in My Homeland*, by Almeida Garrett (Peter Owen, £12.95, ISBN 0 720 60663 2); *The History of the Siege of Lisbon*, by José Saramago (Harvill, £8.99, ISBN 1 860 46132 8).

Food and drink are cheap by British standards, though dinner in one of the smartest restaurants — Gambrinus in the centre of town, with the best fish in Lisbon, or Conventual in the Bairro Alto— will give your credit card the kind of jolt it would get in a similar establishment in London. If the Portuguese national drink is port, the national dish is salt cod, *bacalhau*, which appears on every menu: there are, it is said, 365 ways of cooking it.

In a spirit of research we tried it a couple of times, concluded that it was an acquired taste, and revived ourselves with pastries and coffee; Lisboans are justifiably fond of their pastries: we found the best selection at the café on the corner of Rossio Square and the Rua do Ouro.

The most interesting coffee-house is the oldest, A Brasileira on the Rua Garret, once a haunt of the poet Fernando Pessoa, and still frequented by Lisbon's literary and artistic set, one of whom presumably supplied the modern paintings behind the bar.

The other old district, the Bairro Alto, is more regular in plan than the Alfama, and has wider streets: here, too, laundry is the preferred means of decoration. Its heights can be reached by two funicular railways, or by the Santa Justa elevator, a freestanding lift, erected in 1902, with an exuberantly Gothic exterior.

The district, lit by Victorian lanterns, comes alive at night: here you can find the best *fado* clubs — A Severa or Lisboa a Noite, both in the Rua das Gaveas, for example — and can enjoy the quintessential Lisbon experience listening to female singers swathed in black belting out those songs of jealousy and unrequited love that are Portugal's contribution to world music.

If you're addicted to markets of any kind, then you must visit the Ribeira Nova, Lisbon's covered food market, in a splendid building on the bank of the Tagus, just beyond the railway station at Cais do Sodre (itself a fine example of Art Deco architecture).

Piles of fish, from huge tuna to tiny sardines, were heaped on marble slabs on the ground floor. Upstairs, among the fruit and vegetables, a florist plaited flowers into a multi-coloured heart, presumably for a wedding. We dived into the crowd and emerged triumphantly with garlands of dried chilis and a plait of garlic.

Exploring further, we found a dusty hall of bric-à-brac, a good place to come if you run out of reading matter. The boxes of second-hand books yielded a number in English.

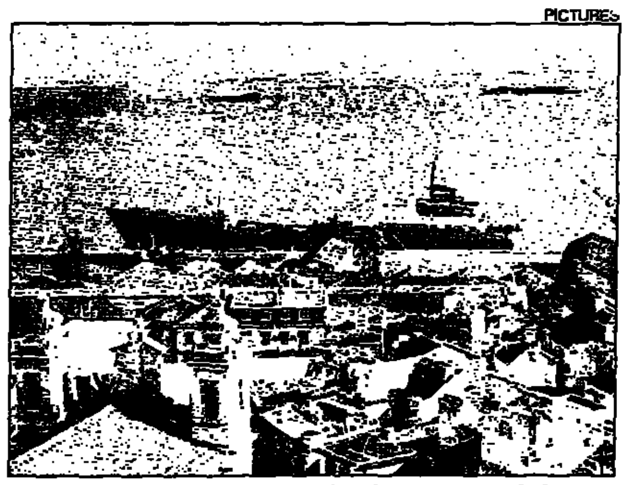
Just a short taxi ride down the river is the suburb of Belem, where the Tagus meets the sea. Portugal's great explorers left from here — Vasco da Gama for India, Magellan to circumnavigate the world and Bartholomeu Dias to round the Cape of Good Hope. There are two monuments to this age of discovery — the early 15th century tower of Belem and the impressive Memorial to the Discoveries, opened in 1960, which has the form of the bow of a caravel, crowded with symbolic stone figures.

After energetic and very enjoyable days we just had time for a valedictory pastry at the airport before, footsore but fulfilled, flying home without a single recipe for salt cod.

TIM BINYON

● *The author was a guest of Crystal Cities.*

PICTURES:



Alfama on the River Tagus is the oldest district of Lisbon

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	Tue	18	Mar	Ashdod, Israel	Jerusalem & Bethlehem
	Wed	19	Mar	Port Said, Egypt	Cairo & Pyramids
	Thu	20	Mar	At sea	–
	Fri	21	Mar	Kusadasi, Turkey	Ephesus
Cruise 9707	Fri	21	Mar	Kusadasi, Turkey.	Ephesus
	Sat	22	Mar	At sea	–
	Sun	23	Mar	Port Said, Egypt	Cairo & Pyramids
	Mon	24	Mar	Ashdod, Israel	Jerusalem & Bethlehem
	Tues	25	Mar	Haifa, Israel	Lower Galilee
	Wed	26	Mar	Limassol, Cyprus	Curium & Kolossi
	Thu	27	Mar	Rhodes	Lindos
	Fri	28	Mar	Heraklion, Crete	Knossos

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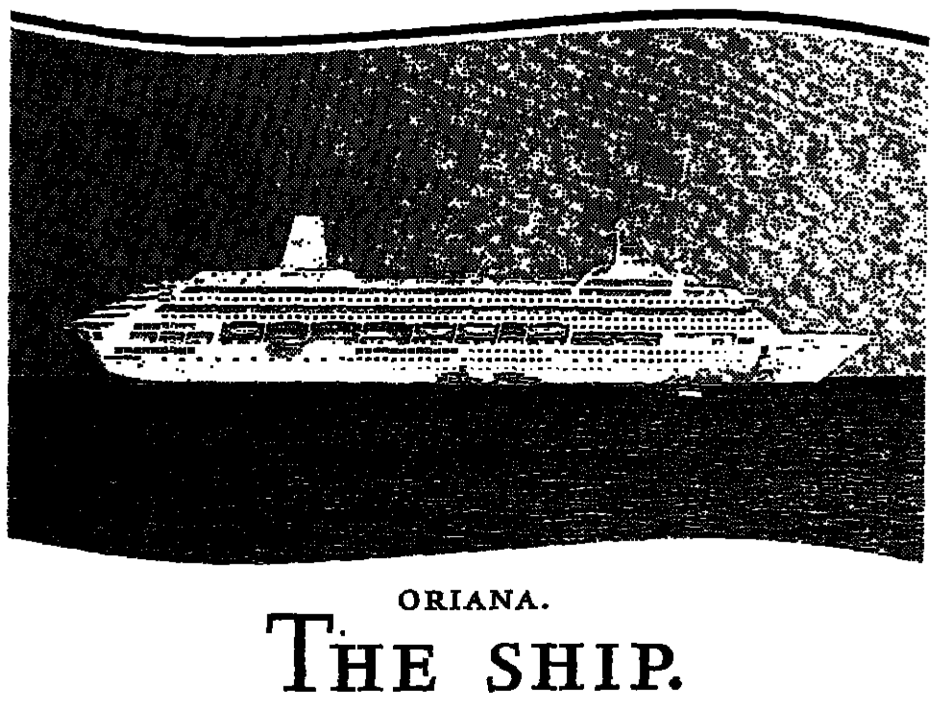

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Egypt: A journey by boat from polluted Cairo and the pyramids to the ancient tombs and temples of Luxor

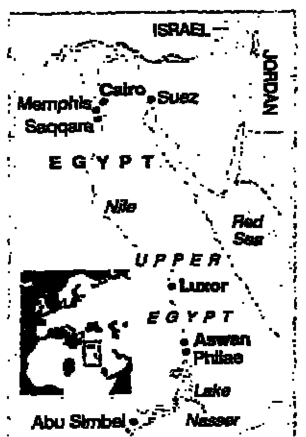
Intoxicating mix of history and petrol fumes

The ancient Egyptians believed in immortality. Their motto, unlike that of the Christians, was that you can and should take your wealth with you when you die. The evidence for this belief, in the form of the tombs at Luxor and the Tutankhamun treasure in the Cairo Museum, makes Egypt a fascinating place to visit. Add to this a blue sky and a temperature of about 70F in early January and the arguments for going there become irresistible.

Cairo today could well be described as the Athens of North Africa — and this is not meant as a compliment. Like Athens, it is overwhelmed by the combustion engine. In Cairo the traffic jam has reached the level of an art form. Donkeys harnessed to vegetable carts trot briskly along in the fast lane while all around them fanatically competitive drivers engage in their personal chicken run to a cacophany of horns. The overriding smell is of petrol.

The main reason to brave all this is to visit the Cairo museum. The treasure from Tutankhamun's tomb is magnificent, for the richness of the materials and the artistry of the workmanship; only a small selection of it has ever left the museum for exhibition elsewhere.

There are simpler things to enjoy, too — the lifelike frieze of geese from Meidun (about 2600 BC), the clay models of a court dwarf and his loving family (2500 BC) and a Nile grandee's favourite possessions, including his house with pool and orchard of fig trees (2000 BC). A 3,000-year-old mummified pet monkey is touchingly lifelike and still has fur. The beautifully etched Narmer palette dates from 3100 BC.



To enjoy the Cairo treasures without the honking and the petrol smells, the best place to stay is the Mena House Oberoi hotel on the outskirts of the city, beside the pyramids. Winston Churchill and General Montgomery, among other celebrities, stayed in the crenellated palace built in 1869 by the Khedive Ismail. There are now 90 expensive and very desirable "palace" rooms and 400 other bedrooms around the oasis of the gardens.

The hotel is big and mostly full of tour groups but is stylishly run, with excellent service. It is convenient for visits to the pyramids of Giza and the Sphinx, in itself one of the most moving sights in the world, the older (2650 BC) step pyramid of Zoser at Saqqara, and the remains of the old capital at Memphis.

I found the Giza pyramids disappointing — they look best from a distance, because modern Cairo has encroached too close to them. But they are impressive seen at dusk, towering over the hotel.

Few could fail to be impressed by the sights of Upper Egypt; the golden Ptolemaic temple of Philae, rebuilt on an island in the Nile above Aswan, or the *feluccas* sailing gracefully along the river.

Abu Simbel is a three-hour drive to the south; warned by our guide book that the reconstructed monuments, moved during the Aswan Dam project, have an artificial air, we didn't make the trip. We could have stayed at the Old Cataract Hotel where, apparently, Agatha Christie wrote *Death on the Nile*, but chose to cruise down river to Luxor in comfort on the MS *Liberty*.

Gliding along the river, with its strip of narrow agricultural land backed by the desert, is one of the most peaceful of experiences. You stop for a visit to the splendid Ptolemaic temple of Edfu, but would be better advised to stay on board at Kom Ombo, where the tourist boats mill around in a manner reminiscent of Hyde Park Corner at its worst. Anyway, the temple is better seen at a distance.

The best sights are at Luxor: the Valley of the Kings and the Valley of the Queens on the west bank, the temples of Karnak and Luxor on the east.

We rose just before dawn to buy tickets to the newly restored tomb of Queen Nefertari (access is limited to 150 visitors a day), and did not regret it. As the sun appeared over the mountain tops, the tomb stood out rose-coloured against a deep blue sky.

Built in about 1250 BC by Rameses II for Nefertari, one of his five wives, the tomb is one of the greatest monuments to human love in the world; the colours and artistry of the wall paintings are breathtaking. "You are in the embrace of history," read the signs at the entrances to the valleys. "Smile you are in Luxor," others ordered.

The effect of the tombs is immediate: 30 centuries of history seem to have passed in a glance of time.

The temples, too, are among the most impressive you will see; a jumble of different periods and styles each expressing the megalomania of a particular pharaoh.

You can laze by the pool of the magnificent Old Winter Palace Hotel, using it as a base for expeditions, or you can sleep on the boat. Be advised that the Nile boats vary immensely in quality from rackety gin palaces teeming with tourists to the smaller, more exclusive ships such as the *Liberty*, a model of comfort, service and good food.

Smile in Luxor? We certainly did.

SARAH BRADFORD

● *The author was a guest of Bales Tours.*

MECKY FOGELING

The stony-faced, lasting emblem of power in ancient Egypt symbolised at one of the many temples of Luxor

EGYPT FACT FILE

■ Bales Tours, Bales House, Junction Road, Dorking, Surrey RH4 3HL (01306 741526; brochure 885923) offers a nine-day trip on the MS *Liberty* flying from London to Luxor and returning via Cairo from £825 per person. Bales can arrange tailormade holidays, such as the author's trip, at £1,350 per person, including return scheduled flights from London to Cairo, two flights within Egypt, four nights' B&B at the Mena Garden Oberoi hotel and four nights' with full board and a comprehensive sightseeing.

■ Other specialist tour operators include Abercrombie and Kent (0171-730 9600).

■ Return flights London/Cairo start from £310 with Egyptair (0171-734 2395). British Airways (0345 222111) offers daily flights from £541.

■ The Mena House Oberoi hotel (00 20 2 3833444, fax 3837777) offers a double room in the palace from £179 a night, and from £119 for a double in the garden accommodation. Sofitel Winter Palace at Luxor (00 20 95 380422; fax: 374087) offers rooms from £84 per person a night (Nile view supplement £9).

■ The best time to visit Egypt is between October and April, when the average temperature in Luxor and Aswan is 70F.

■ Vaccination against typhoid, malaria, polio, tetanus and hepatitis A are recommended, but see your GP.

■ Reading: *A Thousand Miles Up the Nile*, by Amelia Edwards (Parkway, £9.99, ISBN 1 898 25900 3). *The Penguin Guide to Ancient Egypt*, by William J. Murnane (£16, ISBN 0 140 46952 4). *Guide Egypt*, by Michael Haag (Cadogan, £12.99, ISBN 0 947 75431 8).

■ Egyptian Tourist Office, 170 Piccadilly, London W1V 9DD (0171-493 5282).

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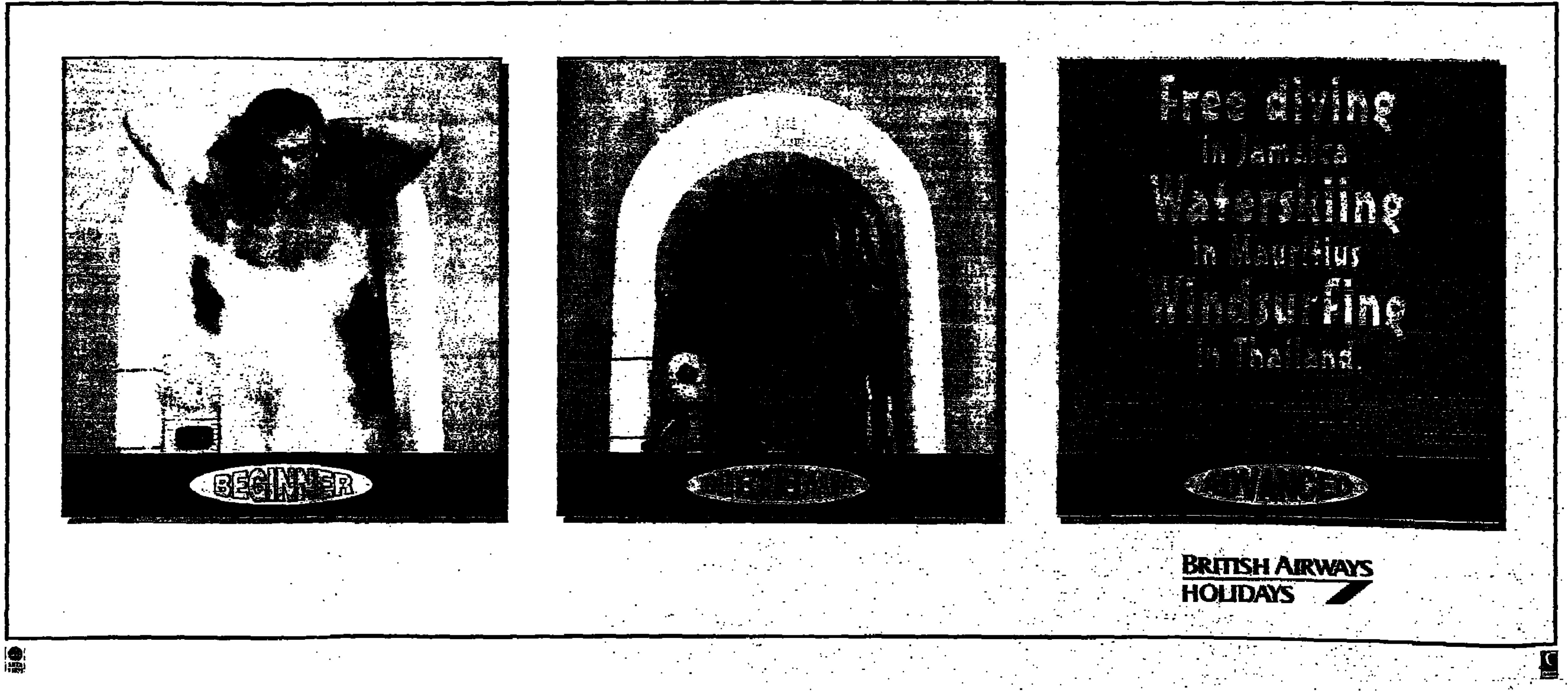


Cruising: Play your cards right and you, too, could become flushed with success on a Caribbean poker trip

Learning to call a spade a spade

Key West, Florida — aces back to back, beaten by three kings. Ochos Rios, Jamaica — now you have caught trip jacks, outdrawn by a straight. Cozumel, Mexico — finally, a high flush and your opponent catches a deuce to make a full boat.

But never mind these temporary setbacks. There is always another deal coming up. That is the joy of a poker cruise, a trip which gives fresh meaning to Damon Runyon's famous floating crap game.

This cruise was through the western Caribbean, aboard a Holland America liner, with calls at a succession of sunny islands for sightseeing and snorkelling. Refreshing as it was to go ashore and gulp down frozen daiquiris and raw seafood, no one was in any doubt about the real purpose of the cruise.

If you are a poker player, a gambling cruise is a fantasy come true. Games are in progress round the clock, without the usual domestic distractions back home of placating wives or lovers or organising half a dozen friends to show up on time. Spouses or companions who are not themselves card players can sail away, assured that there is still plenty of entertainment beyond the tables.

David Spanier tries his hand aboard the *Veendam*

Sailing on the *Veendam*, a sleek 55,000 tons, was like being aboard an international hotel. Until the last day of my week, when a swell came up in the Gulf of Mexico, there was almost no sensation of being on water. The sea, of course, was always a presence, under pure blue skies, whenever we card players chose to raise our eyes and look out of the porthole. But when it is time for the next deal, who can glance to port or starboard? It is strictly eyes down. Poker cruises are organised by a travel company in Las Vegas run by June Field — a formidable player in her own right. Ms Field's motto is "We pamper our players". With up to 14 tables in action addicts can indulge their passion away from the hustle of regular casinos.

It is also an opportunity for players whose previous experience of poker may be limited to Friday nights round the kitchen table to meet a group of fellow enthusiasts, of all kinds and levels of skill. The *Veendam* accommodated more than 1,500 passengers, of whom 320 were in the poker group. The games were played in a private room hidden in the prow of the ship, which non-playing passengers would never discover unless they wandered in by accident.

A merry crew of dealers, lured from their regular employment in the smoky grind of Las Vegas by the draw of a free trip, ran the games. The dealers were not paid salaries on the cruise but relied on tips (usually $1 a hand) when players won, which is the normal style of American casinos. But unlike typical casino poker, the games were sparked by a shipboard sense of fun — though still serious enough to lose money.

The lowest stake game was seven card stud with a $2 opening bid (about £1.25) and $4 raises, which is not going to ruin anyone. Texas Hold 'Em, which is the most popular form of poker in America and Europe, can be learnt in about three and a half minutes. But beware, it takes a lifetime to play well.

The action, day and night, came to a complete stop only when the *Veendam* docked. First port of call after embarkation at Fort Lauderdale, Florida, was Key West, where Ernest Hemingway's home is a must-see attraction. A fine old plantation-style house, surrounded by tropical greenery, with plain white rooms under languid overhead fans, is perfectly in character. The writer's battered typewriter can be seen in his study, amid his household bric-à-brac. The whole place is redolent of Hemingway and brings the visitor back to his books with renewed enjoyment.

Next stop was Cozumel, a typical tourist township catering for cruise passengers. The atmosphere was relaxed and friendly, unlike Ochos Rios, Jamaica, where aggressive tour guides and taxi drivers threatened to overwhelm passengers the moment they stepped ashore. Cozumel offered jewellery and knick-knacks, but my abiding memory (if I could remember it) is of Pedro's and Carlos's bar. The speciality here was pouring tequila down a long tube straight into the visitor's throat, the only known cure for which is to dance the *macarena* until you drop.

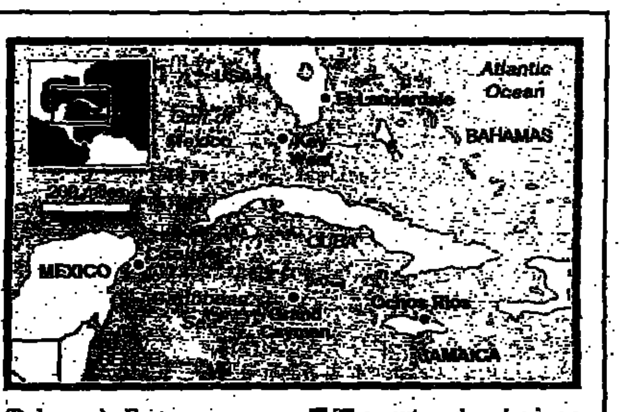
Grand Cayman was the most agreeable tour stop. Perhaps best known as a tax refuge, the island is like a green, easy-going home from home, where the letterboxes are red and cars drive on the left. The first attraction of Grand Cayman is the snorkelling and, for serious exponents, deep-sea diving. You can go in one metre off the beach and bump into a cornucopia of green and mauve parrot fish and yellowtail snapper over the coral. The fish are so eager for breadcrumbs that a whole shoal will spray over a swimmer like a fountain to get at the food. Further on, beyond Seven Mile Beach, the favoured spot is Sting Ray City. Snorkellers can float on the surface and observe these triangular creatures swooping by like Space Invaders. And so back on board for the final poker session, played in the style of a knock-out tournament. The players each paid an entry fee and the winner scooped the pool. Just as on the coral reef, the shoal of colourful fish at the poker tables attracts one or two predators looking for a snack. In the end, the pros take the money while the rest of us have to be content with silk jackets and baseball caps as a memento of the voyage.

DAVID SPANIER

PICTURES

Ernest Hemingway's fine plantation-style house in Key West, Florida; this is a must-see port of call during the gambling cruise, where each room is still redolent of the writer

FACT FILE



■ Classic Poker Cruises, 2375 E Tropicana Ave, Suite 281, Las Vegas, Nevada, 89119 (001 702 798 6361).

■ The next poker cruise is on June 5-12, sailing to Alaska (Vancouver - Juneau - Skagway - Ketchikan - Vancouver). Rates per person start from: inside cabin £705; outside cabin £800; suites £1,325; third and fourth passengers £600; children 2-18 £350. Tipping not required. Port taxes £85 per person.

■ There is a cruise on November 12-22 to the Caribbean (Fort Lauderdale - Willemstad (Curaçao) - LaGuaira (Venezuela) - St Georges (Grenada) - Roseau (Dominica) - St John (US Virgin Islands) - Nassau (Bahamas) - Fort Lauderdale). Rates per person start from: inside cabin £700; outside cabin £800; suites £1,000; third and fourth passengers £460;children under three £150. Port taxes £190.

■ Card Player Cruises, 2140 S Polaris Avenue, Suite 8, Las Vegas, Nevada, 89102 (001 702 871 1720).

■ The next card cruise is on February 28-March 12 to the Panama Canal (via Montego Bay (Jamaica) - Cristobal (Panama) - San Blas Islands and Port Limon (Costa Rica) - Cozumel (Mexico)). Prices start from £950 per person.

■ An Alaska cruise on May 28-June 4 starts from £475 per person.

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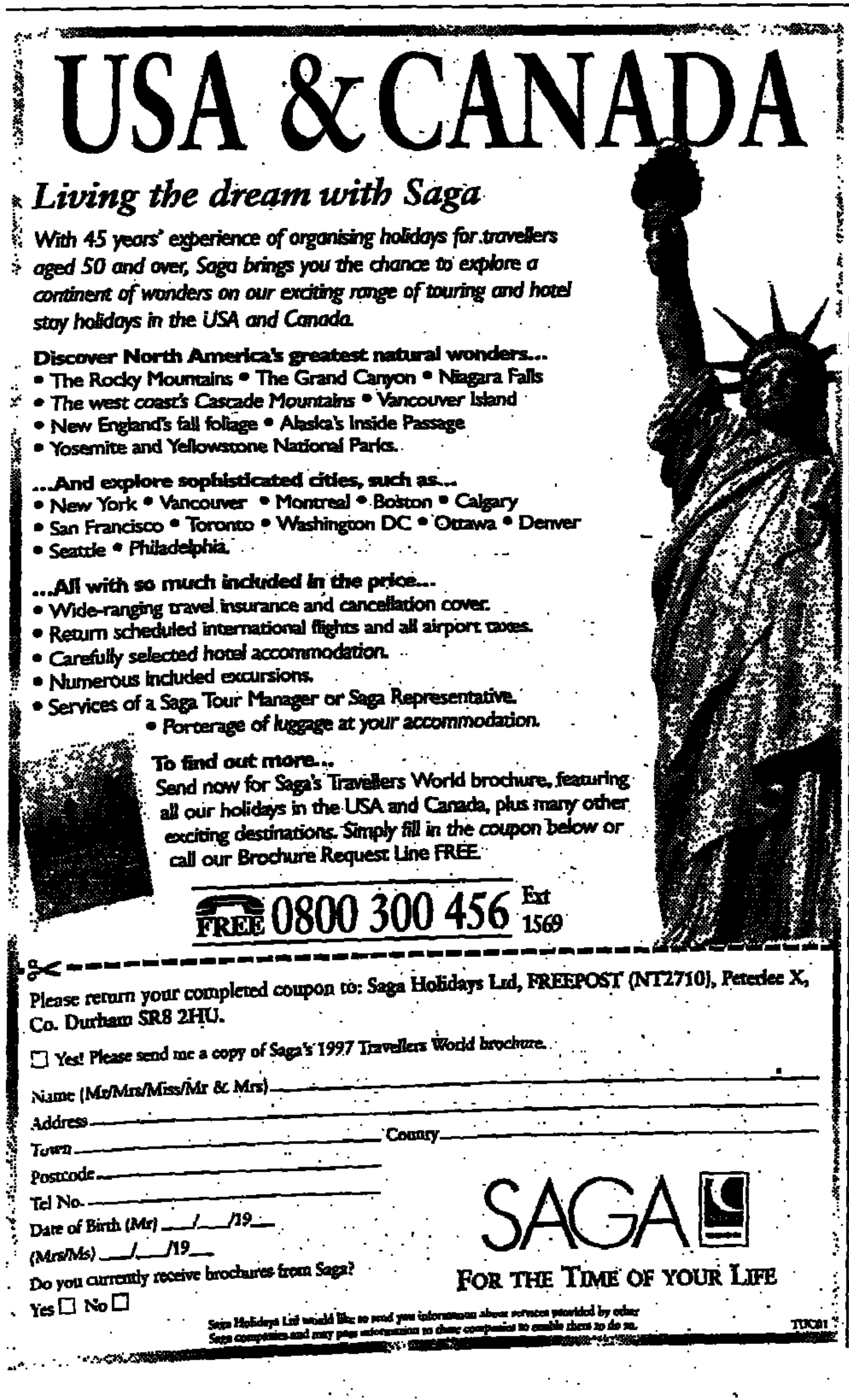

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Britain: Three cities will celebrate the Chinese New Year in style. **Tony Kelly** visits English Chinatowns

Enjoy the great ball of China

AS THE Year of the Rat gives way to the Ox at midnight on Thursday, Chinese people around the world will be letting off firecrackers to celebrate — and to banish the mythological Nin *monster, destroyer of homes and crops, who is* afraid of loud noises. New Year's Eve is like a Chinese Christmas — most feasting takes place among families — but over the weekend, in Manchester, Birmingham and London, celebra*tions will spill onto the streets.*

MANCHESTER

THIS is a little China in the heart of *the city. The imperial archway on* Faulkner Street, designed in Bei*jing, is the largest in Europe,* all curved roofs and carved dragons, a *riot of* gold leaf and ceramics in yellow, red and blue. At night, when *neon lights announce the* restaurants, you could be in Hong Kong.

Where is it? Five minutes' walk from Piccadilly Station, between Princess Street and Charlotte Street.

Where to eat: Charlie Chan's, 39-41 George Street (0161-236 5750). Unusual Cantonese cuisine — veal in orange sauce £9.50, flambéed seafood in oyster sauce £13. Open 7pm-4am daily.

Little Yang Sing, 17 George Street (0161-228 7722). Good-value daytime menu (noon-6pm) — dim sum, soup, main course and tea, £8.95. Vegetarian and lobster banquets, £19-£30.

Pearl City, 33 George Street (0161-228 7683). Dim sum lunch with roast duck and pork, Mon-Sat £8.50, Sun £10-£15.

Yang Sing, 34 Princess Street (0161-236 2200). The best Cantonese *restaurant* in Manchester. Dim sum from noon-5pm; banquets from £18.

Where to shop: Wing Sat, 49 Faulkner Street. Well-stocked Chinese supermarket.

Health: Chinese Herbal and Acupuncture Centre, Wuhan House, 16 *Nicholas Street (0161-228 0131). For* eczema, asthma and menstrual *problems. Daily except Friday,* noon-6pm.

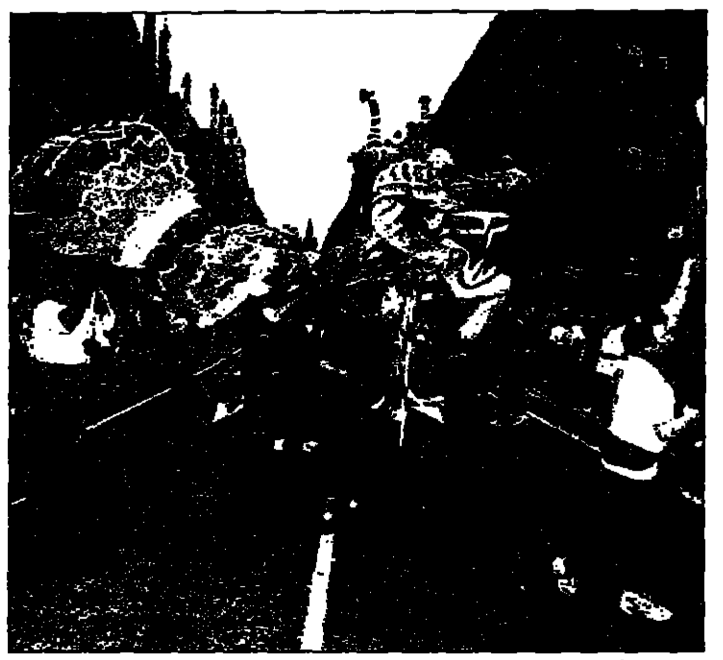
Wai On, 46 George Street (0161-236 4515). Acupuncture and herbal medicine. *Daily 11am-6pm.*

What's on: The Chinese Arts Centre, 36 *Charlotte Street (0161-*236 9251) has regular exhibitions and Chinese language classes. *China — Cradle of Knowledge* is an exhibition celebrating 7,000 years of Chinese inventions at the Museum of Science and Industry, Castlefield (0161-832 1830) from Feb 7 to June 8. Open 10am-5pm daily: adults £5, children £3.

New Year events: Sunday, Feb 9: Open-air party in Chinatown from noon. Lion and dragon dancing, folk music, food and craft stalls.

Where to stay: Portland Thistle Hotel (0161-228 3400) is close to Chinatown and Piccadilly Station. Weekend breaks from £34 per night through Highlife Breaks (0800-700 400).

Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza, Peter Street (0161-236 3333). Double *room £95 at weekends.*



Manchester Chinatown is holding an open-air party all day

BIRMINGHAM

A SHORT pedestrian street in *Brum's "entertainment quarter" is* brightened up by Chinese pillars emblazoned with dragons. *The* voices here are all Chinese or Cantonese; the *shops* sell Chinese newspapers and videos and advertise flights to Hong Kong.

Where is it? Ten minutes' walk south of New Street station between Hurst Street and Pershore Street.

Where to eat: Alex Café, Arcadian Centre, Hurst Street (0121-622 4660). Greasy-chopstick café serving everyday snacks such as pork and salted egg congee, £3.20.

Chung Ying Garden, 17 Thorp Street (0121-622 6622). Nouvelle Cantonese — dim sum from £2, chicken stuffed with banana £8.

Mr Yeung, Upper Level, Arcadian Centre (0121-622 5677). Dim *sum* from noon-5pm, plus vegetarian *menu and Chinese fondues.*

Sum Ye, Arcadian Centre (0121-622 *1525). Takeaway food for £5.*

Where to shop: Day In Supermarket, Arcadian Centre. Huge range of oriental food and wine.

Izer, Arcadian Centre. Chinese silk clothes and kung fu slippers.

Wah Kee Bakery, Arcadian Centre. Cookies filled with sweet red beans, barbecued pork and preserved egg.

Health: Someway Herbal Clinic, Ladywell Walk (0121-622 6818). *Herbal* medicines, acupuncture and aphrodisiacs. Daily except Thursday, 11am-6pm.

New Year events: Saturday, Feb 8: Outdoor party in Victoria Square, 11am-3pm. Chinese music, arts and crafts, lion dance, firecrackers, Chinese food.

Where to stay: Hyatt Regency (0121-643 1234) in centre. Weekend doubles from £69.

Ibis Hotel, Hurst Street (0121-622 6010), doubles from £44.

The Chinese community in Birmingham *will host a party with* Chinese music, *arts and crafts, lion dancing and firecrackers*

[illegible]

THE Chinese community moved here from Limehouse after the war *and in 1985 the area was formally* opened as Chinatown, with bilingual street signs, Chinese arches and two stone lions donated by China. Chinatown is centred on Gerrard Street, lined with Chinese shops and restaurants, their windows adorned with glazed ducks and unmentionable bits of pork. Even the telephone boxes are like red and gold pagodas and there are advertisements for kung fu teachers and feng shui consultants.

Where is it? Between Leicester Square and Shaftesbury Avenue, two minutes' walk from Leicester Square tube.

Where to eat: China China, 3 Gerrard Street (0171-439 7502). Where the locals go for lunch. Barbecued pork with rice, £3.80.

Fung Shing, 15 Lisle Street (0171-437 1539). Cantonese cuisine. Roast pigeon £13, shark's fin hot-pot £50.

Harbour City, 46 Gerrard Street (0171-439 7859). "Exotic" dim sum from £1.60 — try chicken claws in "shy maiden" wine sauce.

*New World, 1 Gerrard Place (0171-*434 2508). The best place for dim sum, served *noon-6pm daily. Most* dishes around £2.

Wong Kei, 41-43 Wardour Street (0171-437 3071). No cheques or credit cards but the cheapest deal — hot and sour soup £1, set dinner £5.80.

Where to shop: Most shops in Chinatown are open 11am-8pm.

Guanghwa, 7 Newport Place. Books, cards and Chinese crafts.

Loon Fung, 44 Gerrard Street. The Chinese kitchen — woks, bamboo steamers, rice, exotic vegetables.

Singalong, 112 Shaftesbury Avenue. Karaoke equipment, plus silk dresses from £50 and jackets, £88.

Health: Beijing Tong Ren Tang UK, 124 Shaftesbury Avenue (0171-287 0098). London branch of China's leading traditional medicine shop. Open 10.30am-7.30pm.

Chinese Medicine Centre, 7 Little Newport Street (0171-287 1095). Largest Chinese clinic in the UK; specialising in skin diseases. Open 11am-*7pm.*

Po Sau Tong, 24 Lisle Street. *Apothecary's den, with jars full of* bark, twigs and roots.

New Year events: *Sunday, Feb 9:* Dragon and lion dances, Chinese opera and food *stalls* on Gerrard Street throughout the afternoon.

What's on: Museum of *London,* London Wall (0171-600 3699) has New Year events to coincide with its exhibition *Half the Sky: Chinese Women in London.* Lion dance 1pm and 2.30pm on Feb 9; Chinese legends (for six years and over) 1.45pm and 3.15pm on Feb 9, *11, 12,* 13, 14 and 16; mask-making 12.45pm and 2.15pm on Feb 11, 12, 13, 14 and 16. Closed Mon.

Tomorrow (Feb 2): Chinese calligraphy at the Ragged School Museum, 46-50 Copperfield Road, E3 (0181-980 6405), 2-3pm, 3.30-4.30pm. Free.

Where to stay: Woodville House, Victoria, SW1 (0171-730 1048). From £54 double room, B&B.

Mount Royal Hotel, off Oxford Street, W1 (0171-629 8040). From £44 per person per night through Highlife Breaks (0800-700 400).

GETTING THERE

National Express (0990 808080) *has day returns from London to* Birmingham for £12.50 and standard returns from London to Manchester for £20.50.

InterCity and regional railways services connect Birmingham, London and Manchester. National Rail inquiries: 0345 484950.

● *The author travelled to Manchester as a guest of Highlife Breaks and Central Trains.*

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Skiing: A Nineties look at the club that helped the Sixties to swing; plus what and where to buy for the slopes

The Club Vagabond, perched high above Leysin in the Swiss Alps, is hoping to regain its international reputation of the Sixties for wild, anything-goes *aprés-ski* parties

Great day, let's party

The 1960s are back in fashion and Club Vagabond, *the* venue for young international skiers, is swinging again. The former sanatorium, perched above Leysin, one of the highest villages in the Swiss Alps, was the home-from-home to young backpackers, mountain climbers and skiers from all over the world during the era of love and peace.

In those days at the Vag, as it is affectionately known, the beer was cheap, the drugs and sex readily available and the music loud. It was as close as fiercely conservative Switzerland got to Carnaby Street, and it was a non-stop party. Except, of course, during daylight hours when patrons with anything less than crippling hangovers were out testing their mountain skills.

The good times could not last *forever*, and neither could the Vag. Its famous mountaineering *school* lost its allure as climbers lost their lives in *alarming numbers*, and the Arab oil embargo pretty much *killed off the youth travel* market. The death in an avalanche *in* 1976 of Dougal Haston, the British Everest and Eiger veteran *who ran the* mountaineering school, marked the end of *an* era.

The Vag somehow limped *into the 1980s, but the romance* had gone. The Ice Cave, the Vag's subterranean *disco that* was the heart of Leysin's party scene, *was boarded up and* tourists began to flock to Switzerland's *bigger and more* *luxurious resorts*, such as Verbier and Gstaad.

The Vag, however, still had its fans. One was Dominique *Grosz*, a *London* film cameraman and Leysin native who was *saddened to see the* decay of his teenage haunt. So three years ago *he bought the* place and *set* about bringing it back *to life*. Today, Club Vagabond is *buzzing* with young skiers and climbers from dozens of countries. The Ice Cave has reopened and even some of the regulars from the Vag's heyday can be seen at the bar.

Alan Rankin, a 69-year-old Canadian who started the Vag in 1961, *says the new Vag will* never be quite like the old one, but that it has its *moments*. Living in Leysin and a regular patron of the Vag, he says: "It brings back good memories of the 1960s and 1970s when it was an unbelievable party every night."

A fellow journalist and I met Mr Grosz early *last year*. He discovered that we all had a *mutual passion for skiing and* beer and we were soon on a *flight to Geneva*.

Leysin can be reached by car from Geneva but *the two-hour* train trip is more enjoyable. The train skirted *Lake* Geneva, passing Lausanne and Montreux, and dropped us at Aigle in the French speaking Canton of Vaud. We then hopped on to a narrow-gauge train that climbed to Leysin (1,350m up) at little more than walking speed. The *views of the Rhône* valley and the Mont Blanc region were *spectacular*.

Leysin has an eerie, haunted feel. The village *found fame at* the turn of the century as a healing centre for tuberculosis patients. As a result, it is dominated by spooky old clinics — with wide doors and balconies to accommodate wheelchairs — that have since found new lives as hotels and schools.

The Vag was a clinic until the discovery of antibiotics in the 1940s made it redundant. Today, it looks more like an oversized chalet than a hospital, though the big balconies and spartan rooms remain. Ours was long and narrow, with a triple bunk bed and sink but no lavatory. But it was clean and at Sfr25 (about £10.50) per person a night, plus another Sfr2 for a duvet and towel, it ranks as one of the Alps' great bargains.

We hit the slopes immediately, but soggy, grey clouds ensured near-zero visibility and the runs were icy from lack of snow. Getting to the bottom was a struggle, and once we did we made a beeline for the Vag where, Mr Grosz said, the party was about to begin.

First, however, we ate at Le Feydey restaurant, where the speciality is fondue for real men: no cheese in sight, just great raw chunks of horse, pork, beef and chicken, all lovingly carved by Urban, the chef with the proportions of a small planet.

The party lasted until dawn. It began with gallons of beer in the bar, which later became the stage for a noisy Dutch-Irish band called Albatross, and ended downstairs in the Ice Cave, where we danced drunkenly to the funky music of Pony, the skiing DJ from London. The Vag was pulsating like a frat house on a Friday night and we didn't feel out of place even though we were nearly twice the age of many of the revellers.

The sun came out the next day and the skiing was fine on the upper slopes. The mountain, which is popular with snowboarders, had a good collection of wide gentle runs and challenging mogul fields, though anyone used to the on and off-piste variety of the *mega-resorts* would probably get their fill after only two or *three days*.

But we didn't come to Leysin *for the skiing thrills*. We were there for the party, and the Vag *does après-ski* like nowhere else.

ERIC REGULY

● *The author was a guest of Swissair.*

Ski travel offer, page 6

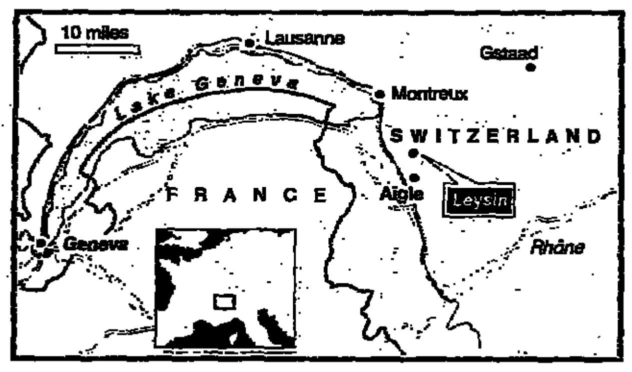
LEYSIN FACT FILE

■ Swissair (0171-434 7300), which has daily flights from Heathrow to Geneva, offers a special rate of £99 return, Mon-Thurs (£109 weekends, to include a Saturday night) until Mar 31. Then, £123 midweek and £143 weekends. Add £12 tax to all prices.

■ Leysin is 135km (85 miles) from Geneva, about two hours by car and 23km off the Geneva-Martigny expressway. It has more than 20 hotels, ranging from bunkhouse chalets, such as Club Vagabond (00 41 24 494 1321), to four-star resorts, such as the Classic and *Leysin* Parc, with prices to match (for *full details* call the Leysin tourism office on 00 41 24 494 2244.

■ The British booking agents for Club Vagabond are *Low Pressure Travel (0181-960 1916) and Ski Top Deck* (0171-370 4555). The Vag's basic price is Sfr25 (about *£10.50) per person per night (another Sfr2 for duvet and* towels). Seven nights, with breakfast and evening *meals, costs Sfr295. Group discounts of 5-10 per cent are* available. A tenth night is free for groups of five or *more. Snowboard and ski packages, which include* accommodation, half board, lift passes and rentals, *start at Sfr245. There are also a summer rock-climbing* packages from Sfr390.

■ Leysin has about 60km of marked ski trails, with 19 lifts, for all levels of expertise. Adult lift tickets are Sfr38 a day, Sfr212 for seven days. Children's tickets are Sfr23 a day, Sfr128 for seven days. The ski school offers group and private lessons in alpine and cross-country skiing, *telemarking, snowboarding, acrobatic skiing and* paragliding.



Gearing up by phone

IF YOU ARE planning a *skiing holiday but unable to* coerce the family into visiting the shops, try ordering *your* ski clothing and equipment by mail order. There is a huge range of products, and catalogues are available free.

■ ***Colorado***
(01228 792006)
Be visible on the slopes whatever the weather. All-weather Glittertind women's jacket (code: 960402), £79.99 in red or green with matching pants. Kilimanjaro (960302), £69.99 in deep yellow or black. Men's Scooby board/ski jacket *(961001), £59.99; Incredible* matching trousers (961002), £45.99 in blue, green or russet.

■ **The Great Little Trading Company**
(0990 673008)
Children need to wrap up warm in the snow. For babies, the Fleece Zip-Up Suit is £34.99. For older children and toddlers the Fleece Jacket is £39.99 and Fleece Poncho £21.99, all available in red, emerald or royal blue. For under sixes: Fleece Hats, £9.99, with Velcro flap under the chin — in red/navy or emerald/royal blue.

■ **The Snowboard Asylum** (0161-834 5555)
Gloves are essential for snowboarders. Prices start at £35 for the Columbia Vert Glove (code: 812514) in black, waterproof with reinforced palm and fingers. Or the Fishpaw Whitlock Extreme Mitt (812525), £94.99, which also features a rubber goggle-wipe mounted on the thumb. Snowboards, including bindings, start at £329.99 for the Simple Board & Binding model.

■ **Snow + Rock**
(01932 569569)
Safety is paramount when *skiing off-piste. The Ortovox* Avalanche Shovel (ref ASOS), *weighing 600g, £65, can be* used as an emergency sled or *to dig a car out of the snow. To* find your way home, the *Magellan GPS 2000 route* finder (ref MGGPS), £199.50, *will guide you.*

■ **Beauty Quest**
(0541 505000)
Ideal for the family, the Sun Survival Kit (code: QS1042), £25, contains SPF25 Water Resistant Spray-On Sunscreen (8fl oz); SPF8 Water *Resistant Sunscreen (4.5fl oz);* Ice Finalising Gel (1fl oz) to *make tans last longer;* SPF25 Lip Protector on a Rope; SPF15 *Water Resistant Sunscreen* (4.5fl oz) and Aloe Vera Moisturising Gel (8fl oz) to help revitalise sunburnt skin.

■ **White Book**
(0161-834 5555)
If the weather is appalling, goggles make all the difference. The V3 Regulator (code: 670019), £69.99, is unisex and allows airflow to vary according to changing weather conditions. The Monashee OTG PMT (670006), £39.99, will fit over most prescription glasses and eliminate pressure on the temple. Both goggles claim to block out 100 per cent of the sun's ultra-violet rays.

Colorado's Glittertind jacket

■ **Mulberry**
(0171-491 3900)
Forget the St Bernard, the 6oz Nile Leather Hip Flask, £79, *or 4oz at £65, with stainless* steel cup, slips neatly into any *skiing outfit.* Wrap up on the ski lift with a Double Sided *Ancient Tartan Rug, £165, in* Mulberry tartan, Macrihan*ish or Ancient McArthur.*

■ **Blacks**
(0191-416 2929)
For serious skiers the SOS Classic Trippler Jacket (code: 340355), £349.99, has a three-in-one function: shell, fleece or warm winter jacket. For the more lighthearted, the Moose Head Hat (330697), £19.99; Wild Hat P150 (330324), £34.99; and Porridge Fleece Hat P149 (330302), £27.99.

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THE ITINERARY

DAY 1 London (Gatwick)-Moscow with British Airways afternoon departure. Drive to the Krasin and embark.

DAY 2 Moscow Morning visit to the Kremlin including the Armoury Museum. In the afternoon visit the Pushkin Museum and town house in *which Tolstoy lived from 1882-1909. Evening* performance at the Bolshoi.

DAY 3 Moscow In the morning drive to Klin for a visit to Tchaikovsky's home. Afternoon visit to the Tretyakov Gallery. *Sail in the late afternoon.*

DAY 4 Uglich Morning cruising the Volga. Afternoon visit to Uglich. See the Church of St John and the Cathedral of the Resurrection. Tsarevich Dmitri, the last son of Ivan the Terrible was murdered here, an event which formed the background to Pushkin's drama and Mussorgsky's opera Boris Godunov.

DAY 5 Kostroma Before the Revolution, Kostroma was a great centre of the arts and home to the Romanovs and Godunovs. Today it is one of the loveliest cities of the Golden Ring. See the historic centre including the Ipatyevsky Monastery and drive to nearby Plyos, a charming Volga town where Isaac Levitan, *perhaps the best of all Volga* landscape painters produced his best work. *Visit the gallery before returning to Kostroma.*

DAY 6 Yaroslavl A city of cupolas and spires where aristocratic classicism blends with typical Russian mercantile colour creating a city of *great interest*. Prince Andrei Bolkonsky from Tolstoy's 'War and Peace' died here and this was also the site of *Russia's first National Theatre and first provincial* newspaper. See the 17th century church of Elijah *the Prophet and explore its ancient streets.*

DAY 7 Goritsy Nearby is the imposing and fortress-like Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery. Afternoon cruising.

DAY 8 Kizhi Spend the morning cruising on *the vast lake of Onega. Here in the majestic* Karelian countryside we will visit the tiny island *of Kizhi famous* for its 22 domed wooden church, which was created without the aid of a single metal nail.

DAY 9 Svir Stroy Today we will stop at a small *settlement on the River Stroy which links the* two great lakes of Onega and Ladoga. It is a *charming area of farms and forests and ideal for* country walks.

DAY 10 St Petersburg Morning city drive around St Petersburg's aristocratic palaces and a visit to the *Russian Museum which specialises* in Russian art from the 18th century onwards. *Afternoon visit to the Pushkin Palace. Evening* performance at the Mariinsky Theatre.

DAY 11 St Petersburg Morning visit to the incomparable Hermitage Museum. After lunch there *will be a tour of the Rimsky-Korsakov* Museum. Evening ballet performance at the *restored intimate theatre in the Winter Palace* which was once the personal theatre of *Catherine the Great.*

DAY 12 St Petersburg-London (Gatwick) Permission is being sought for a visit to the Brodsky Museum which is scheduled to open in the spring. Afternoon flight with British Airways.

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*This reverse itinerary is a longer duration-15 days. Full itinerary and prices are available on request.

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Be a sport in Florida

THE SUCCESS of Tim Henman in Australia and his elevation into the world's top 20 is already increasing interest in tennis, as it did in Roger Taylor's heyday. The Boca Raton Resort & Club on Florida's Gold Coast, where Steffi Graf, Jennifer Capriati and a host of other champions train, is offering inclusive tennis packages with unlimited use of one of the 30 courts and professional tennis clinics from £255 a night for two people sharing. In addition to the courts (which are ingeniously watered from below), Boca Raton has half a mile of private beach, two 18-hole golf courses, several swimming pools and a fitness centre. Booking may be made via Utell International (0990 300200). Several tour operators offer inclusive packages including Elegant Resorts, Kuoni and British Airways Holidays.

City types

THE YHA (01727 855215) will open two new city Youth Hostels this summer — in the Albert Dock region of Liverpool and at St Pancras in London. The new purpose-built Liverpool hostel will have 100 beds with four and five-bedded rooms, while that in London, opposite the new British Library, will have 150. Overnight B&B prices at Liverpool will be £12.50 for adults, £8.65 for under 18s, and at St Pancras £20.50 and £17.50 respectively.

The Boca Raton Resort & Club on Florida's Gold Coast offers packages of golf or tennis from £225 for two people sharing

Walking Italy

A TEN-DAY walk, the Southern Lucano Trail through the Pollino, Italy's wildest National Park, travelling from Terranova di Pillino to Maratea on the west coast, is a new escorted-group holiday from Alternative Travel (01865 513333). The firm specialises in journeys on foot through some of the most beautiful and often lesser known countryside in Europe. There's nothing hair shirt about the accommodation which tends to be in three and four-star hotels, with good food and wine considered a just reward at the end of the day. The trip costs £1,345 with full board and flights.

For those who prefer to go it alone and set their own pace, a seven-night holiday in Latium and Orvieto north of Rome, sets off from walled Viterbo following the ancient Roman road via Cassia and continuing from medieval Bolsena via the old pilgrims' route to Orvieto. Luggage is transported between hotels and the price, which includes flights, is from £750 half board.

Go Guyanan

THOUGH sometimes promoted oddly as an alternative Caribbean destination (it has neither the glamour nor the good beaches), the real appeal of little-known Guyana — the only English-speaking country in South Amercia — lies in the great rivers of the Amazon basin, its virgin forests, wildlife and waterfalls such as the magnificent Kaietur Falls and atmospheric gold and mining towns like Bartica straight out of the Old West. Plus working cattle ranches, Amerindian villages and a potentially highly attractive, though neglected, colonial capital Georgetown.

Trips Worldwide (0117-987 2626) offers a week's tour for £1,455, two weeks for £2,250 for accommodation, most meals and BWIA flights via Trinidad or Barbados.

Scilly things

GARDENERS and writers can head for the Island Hotel (01720 422883) in the Isles of Scilly for gardeners' holidays in April and September, and a new Writers' Workshop in April. The classroom is Tresco's Abbey Gardens, famous for its collection of exotic plants, shrubs and trees. The curator, Mike Nelhams, will advise on how to grow some of the plants in less temperate climates, as well as giving tutorials on glasshouse cultivation and propagation.

The poet and lecturer, Hilary Elfick, will conduct the writers' workshop, drawing on Tresco's environment and surrounding islands as inspiration. Both courses cost £595 a week half board, but excluding travel to the Scillies.

Ionian gem

ALL SEVEN Ionian islands are offered by the Greek Island Club (01932 220477) including, for the first time, remote little Kythira, which still retains the magic ingredients that make up the ideal Greek Island; a crumbling Venetian fortress, blue domed shrines perched on rocks, an ancient capital on high, resorts where fishing boats outnumber the noisy jetskis, and clear, unpolluted water (pebbles rather than sand beaches). Minoan tombs and Byzantine churches add historical interest.

Two weeks in the Captain's House on the waterfront at Kapsali costs from £625 including flight and an overnight hotel stay in Athens.

Field courses

FARM HOSPITALITY is offered throughout Poland at some 6,000 farms or smallholdings, with facilities ranging from chalets to camp sites, with overnight costs in the region of £2-£8 per person, or £8-£15 with full board.

There is no central reservation system but the Polish National Tourist Office in London (0171-580 8811) has full details, and contact points in the various regions of Poland.

In top gear

MOTORCYCLE and Motorhome hire in America is offered by Travelpack (0990 747101). A Goldwing, Nighthawk, Triumph Trophy or Thunderbird costs from £232 a week, while a Campervan sleeping a family of three costs from £283 a week, rising to £415 for a top of the range model sleeping seven. The first 500 miles and insurance are included in the price.

Turkish tastes

AS TURKEY becomes more popular it was inevitable that someone would offer Unknown Turkey. The Imaginative Travellers (0181-742 8612) offers a 16-night trip, with two nights on the ferry from Istanbul along the Black Sea coast, then crossing the country from east to west. The Sumela Monastery near Trabzon is included, plus a dip in the hot springs in the Hemsin Valley, the ancient city of Erzurum, and a two-day walking exploration of Cappadocia — at a cost of £695.

Magic carpet to France

French Railways are offering a new sensation. On the TGV route from Paris to Lyons you can now travel by Duplex, a double-decker carriage not unlike a luxury motorway coach which, at speeds close to 300km an hour (about 187mph) gives the impression of low-level flying — exhilarating but in no way unnerving.

Whenever I travel across France I try to go by TGV, the high-speed train that points to a golden future for rail transport. With comfortable seating and plenty of leg room, the flagships of French Railways appeal equally to passengers who want a working journey as to those in need of relaxation.

Soon there will be Duplexes on several routes. Demand for TGV seats is outpacing supply and they are one way of increasing capacity without affecting speed.

It is no coincidence that the Duplexes should appear first on the Paris to Lyons line. The extraordinary thing about the new generation of European rail services is how they have opened up places hitherto virtually closed to tourist traffic. Lyons is a case in point. Until recently, the leisure appeal of this marvellous city with its great Roman amphitheatre, a Renaissance old town where once silk traders thrived, a wealth of musuems and galléries and some of the best restaurants in France was overshadowed by its commercial reputation. But no longer.

With the experience of the train journey being part of the enjoyment of a three or four-day break, Lyons has come into its own as a worthy rival to more familiar destinations on the tourist trail. For British visitors to Lyons the starting point is the Eurostar terminal at Waterloo. There is a choice of routes. Going out I went via Lille, which avoids the crush in Paris and cuts the journey to about six hours. This change from Eurostar to TGV is a mere walk between platforms with plenty of time to spare.

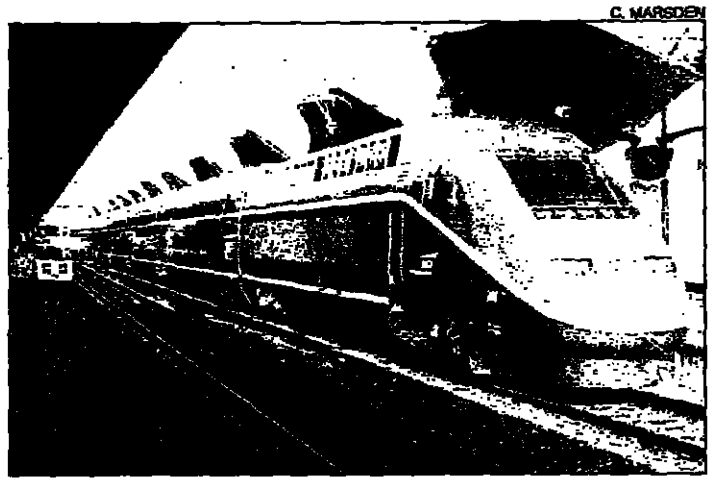
For the return, it was the Duplex to Paris and then a switch from Gare de Lyons to Gare du Nord for the Eurostar. There is now a direct fast track between the two stations but even taking the Metro there was no sense of rush.

Back on the TGV Duplex, I have two minor criticisms. The first is the disappointment in not being able to enjoy a decent meal. Everything has been buffetised so that the best one can do is to put together a selection of dishes from the microwave. But this is pricey. Just a sandwich and a quarter bottle of Beaujolais set me back about £6 so, not surprisingly, many people took their own food.

My other gripe has to do with French railway officials. I do wish they could be more cheerful. The conductor who checked my ticket studied it for so long and with such close attention as to imply that somehow I was up to no good. When, at last, the ticket was handed back it was with a curt nod that seemed to threaten, for next time, 30 days without the option.

BARRY TURNER

● *For French Railway reservations phone the Rail Shop on 0990 300003 or call at French Railways House, 179 Piccadilly, London W1V 0BA. A return fare from London to Lyons, to include one Saturday night away, is £99 standard and £199 first class.*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CHESS

by Raymond Keene

I HAVE been asked to publish what is perhaps the most brilliant game on record. Certainly 19th-century experts such as Steinitz regarded this as one of the supreme masterpieces. White *sacrifices* virtually his entire army, including his queen, to *pin the black king* down in the centre and deliver a *spectacular mate*.

White: Anderssen
Black: Kieseritsky
London, 1851
King's Gambit

1 e4 e5 2 f4 exf4
3 Bc4!?

Usual here is 3 Nf3 developing a piece and preventing 3 . . . Qh4+. The move chosen by Anderssen is more speculative.

3 . . . Qh4+ 4 Kf1 b5?! Black replies to White's aggressive choice *of opening with a counter-gambit*. By playing 3 . . . b5. Black hopes to entice White's bishop away *from* c4 (where it attacks f7) and at the same time to clear the *a8-h1 diagonal for* occupation by his own queen's bishop. Actually, though, *the idea* has little merit.

5 Bxb5 Nf6 6 Nf3. Gaining another useful tempo by developing a piece with an attack *against* Black's queen.

6 . . . Qh6 7 d3 Nh5? More consistent would have been 7 . . . Bb7. The move that Black actually played is inferior. Black now threatens 8 . . . Ng3+ 9 hxg3 Qxh1+, but White's next move is a more than adequate reply.

8 Nh4! Heading for the dominating outpost square f5 — and, of course, preventing 8 . . . Ng3+.

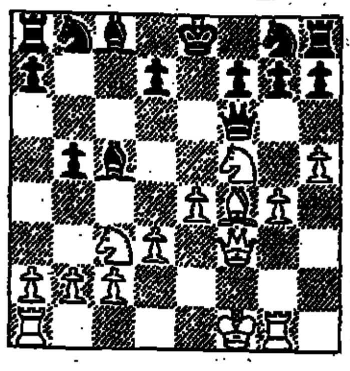
8 . . . Qg5 9 Nf5 c6
10 g4 Nf6?

Better would have been 10 . . . cxb5 11 gxh5, but Black gets greedy and *plays to win White's* g-pawn. No doubt Black expected the game to *continue* 11 Bc4 Qxg4, but Anderssen decides to sacrifice his *bishop* for a pawn and a raging attack.

11 Rg1! cxb5 12 h4 Qg6
13 h5 Qg5 14 Qf3!

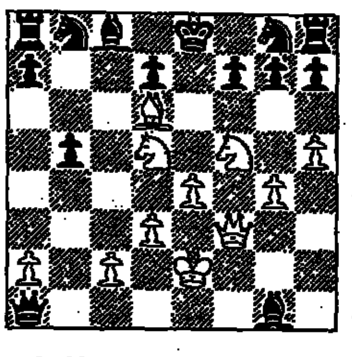
With the terrible threat of 15 Bxf4 winning Black's queen. To gain some mobility for his consort, Black is forced to "undevelop" his only active minor piece.

14 . . . Ng8 15 Bxf4 Qf6
16 Nc3 Bc5



17 Nd5!!? A more prosaic but more effective alternative was 17 d4! after which White's position is overwhelming. If 17 . . . Bxd4 18 Nd5 wins easily. The text plans an amazing *sacrificial continuation* and deserves its "!!" for the brilliance *of the conception. Unfortunately*, a "?" has to be added, since the idea has a flaw.

17 . . . Qxb2 18 Bd6 Qxa1+ 19 Ke2 Bxg1?



A double rook sacrifice! Alas the outcome would have remained totally obscure, if Black had refrained from *snatching* the second rook, and instead played 19 . . . Qb2! Much analysis has been devoted to this variation, but no one has yet shown that White has a forced win. After Black's error, Anderssen finds a sparkling conclusion.

20 e5!! A quiet move, but nonetheless decisive. By blocking Black's queen, White threatens 21 Nxg7+ Kd8 22 Bc7 mate.

20 . . . Na6. After 20 . . . Ba6, 21 Nc7+ Kd8 22 Nxa6 Black could resist a bit longer, but the outcome would be the same. 21 **Nxg7+ Kd8 22 Qf6+!** A final queen sacrifice to top off the combination! **22 . . . Nxf6 23 Be7 mate.**

WINNING MOVE

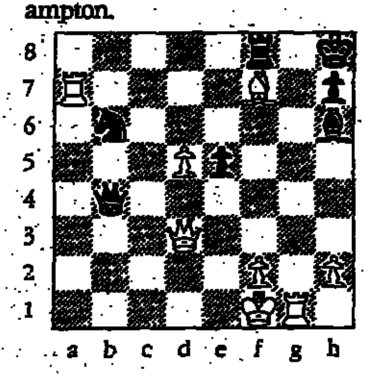
By Raymond Keene

White to play.

This position is from the game Hansen - Mortensen, Veile 1993. *Can you spot White's neat* continuation which forced immediate checkmate?

Send your answer on a postcard to *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London El 9XN. The first correct answer drawn on Thursday will win a year's subscription to the Staunton *Society, which* includes a free invitation to the *annual dinner at Simpson's-in-*the-Strand. The answer will be *published next Saturday.*

Last week's solution: 1 Qxf8+
Last week's winner: Mark Scott *from Sarisbury Green, South*ampton.



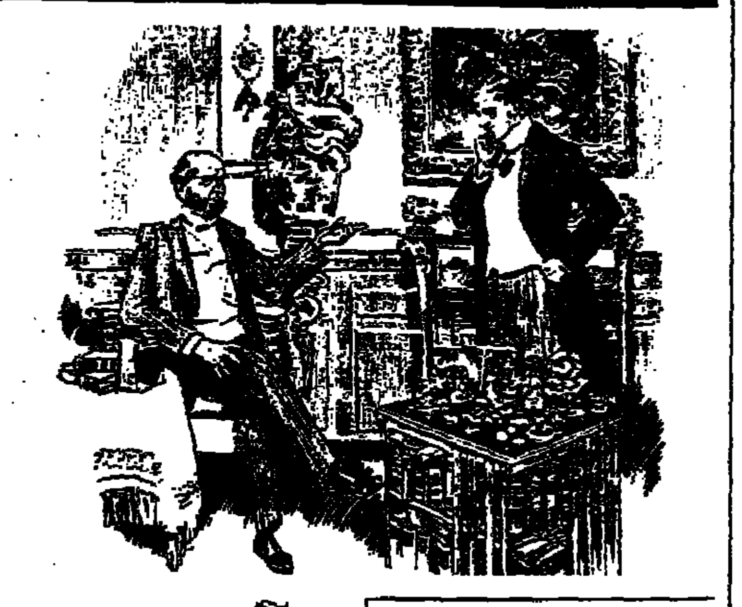
PUNCHLINE

READERS are invited to write an amusing caption for the cartoon (right), from *The Strand Magazine* (reproduced from Westminster Libraries, Sherlock Holmes Collection, Marylebone Library).

The cartoon will be printed again next week *with a caption* from those submitted.

Send caption suggestions on a postcard with your name and address to: Strand Caption 37, Weekend, *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN.

The Editor's decision is final. The closing *date* for entries is Wednesday, February 5.



"Remember to leave a *little hole*, darling, so that Daddy can breathe"

The winning caption for last week's cartoon (above) was submitted by Michael Hunt of Gwynedd

WORD WATCHING

By Philip Howard

SCOMFISH
a. The rock cod
b. Slippery
c. To choke

SMOOR
a. To be choked
b. A knife
c. Nose pick

SERAPE
a. *The lentil*
b. A backward iamb
c. *A shawl*

SKEWBALD
a. With falling hair
b. A Viking bard
c. White and brown

Answers on page 16

BRIDGE

by Robert Sheehan

IN question 5 of the Christmas quiz, you were East on the hand below. This was the auction:

S	W	N	E
1C	Pass	1D	Pass
1S	Pass	2D	Pass
2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass

Your partner *leads* the *queen* of spades, and declarer wins with the king and *returns* the *nine of* diamonds, running it to your queen. You were asked to plan the defence, seeing only the North and East hands.

♠72
♥A532
♦KJ10873
♣J

♠QJ108
♥1084
♦A2
♣7642

N
W E
S

♠953
♥K76
♦Q85
♣Q1098

♠AK64
♥QJ9
♦94
♣AK53

Contract: 3NT by South
Lead: queen of spades

The deal is from Albert Dormer's new compendium, *The Complete Book of Bridge* (Victor Gollancz), a remarkably comprehensive work, and good value at £15 for 450 pages.

These are the steps in the analysis. First, you know your partner has only four spades — declarer bid the suit on the second round of the auction. Your partner is marked with six or seven points, as South has shown about 17-18.

The next reliable inference is that your partner has the ace of diamonds — else declarer would have played ace and another. So with queen and jack *of spades all of your* partner's points are accounted for, and you won't get anywhere by returning the queen of clubs. But playing spades immediately will only give your side four tricks.

What about the declarer's tricks? The brainwave — you can knock out dummy's entry to the diamonds by returning the king of hearts.

Declarer has to let this hold or say goodbye to the diamonds, and now the cash registers ring red-hot (to use one of Dormer's phrases) as you switch back to spades to establish the setting trick.

THE convincing winners of the Macallan International Pairs were *Lorenzo Lauria and Alfredo* Versace. They were members of the *Italian team that won the 1995* European Championship. They *must now be rated one of the top six* pairs in the world. The Danes *Auken and Blakset were second*, with Hamman and Wolff third, *Forrester* and Robson *fourth* and Omar Sharif and Mari fifth.

The *main surprise* was the poor performance (12th of 16 pairs) of Jeff Meckstroth and Eric Rodwell ("Meckwell"), winners of the event for the past two years, and currently rated the best pair in the world. This year only simple natural systems were allowed, and so Meckwell were not able to play their extremely complicated One Club system.

To put that in perspective, the restrictions didn't seem to affect the winners or Hamman and Wolff (3rd); both pairs had to change their methods radically for the event, from a Strong Diamond and a Strong Club system respectively.

COMPUTER GAMES AND PASTIMES

by Tim Wapshott

CUPID, draw back your bow and, with the aid of your trusted computer, let your arrow go. With Valentine's Day just around the corner, now is the time one particular software genre comes into its own — handwriting fonts.

Traditionally the biggest single giveaway when sending anonymous Valentine cards is the handwriting on the envelope. Of course, you could type the address but such results can seem a little too clinical, obvious even. Alternatively, you can import other scalable handwriting fonts from a host of budget titles and, along with them, more than a hint of mystique.

Expert Software's **Handwriting Fonts**, on dual-format Mac and Windows PC CD-Rom, *gives you a* choice of 300 True Type "joined-up" *handwriting styles. These range* from the immature to the immaculate *hand, with styles upright or* leaning left or right.

Handwriting Fonts includes an effective reader application, to let *you preview samples of each of the* 300 fonts to select which ones you *want to install in your PC. Once* loaded, you can opt for any of the new fonts in practically all of your design and word-processing applications on your *hard-drive*. The drawback to Expert Software's title is that practically all the freehand fonts represent modern handwriting styles, most of which look pretty scratchy.

For greater choice of more traditional handwritten styles, such as Olde English calligraphy, try **True Type Script Fonts** from VCI's Premiere Collection. Although this only gives you 45 fonts on its single PC floppy disc, the range is more diverse.

Instead of merely disguising your tracks on the envelope, you can go a step further by designing your own Valentine cards with a greetings card maker. Several newcomers offer a comprehensive *range of cards — including* Christmas, birthday and get *well — which can all be designed*, tweaked and printed in a matter of *minutes*.

For its **Greetings Workshop** *CD-Rom for Windows 95*, Microsoft turned to the well-established *Hallmark card company for* inspiration. The result is a clean *point-and-click card generator with* more than 2,000 ready-to-use Hall*mark Connections cards* and projects. The *bumper library of clip art*, graphics, photos and scalable fonts *here are more than enough to let* you express yourself perfectly.

Equally worthy is Mindscape's **PrintMaster Suite**, also on Win*dows 95 CD-Rom. It is as easy to* master and boasts a large database *of graphics and photos*.

Of course, if you have a digital camera there's nothing to stop you including pictures of yourself in your cards — but that's not such a good trick to try on Valentine cards. For me, though, the classic card printing package remains Sierra's **PrintArtist** CD-Rom for its versatility and quality. As well as the usual run of cards, banners and certificates, PrintArtist has a superior range of paper projects such as miniature shops and cars, which children love to make.

Taking that creative option further is Guildsoft's **Make Me A World** CD-Rom, which lets children print, paint and make *everything they need* for a 3D paper world filled with houses, trees, cars, animals and even paper people.

Returning to romance, this is also the theme for ***Cyberspace Thirty***, *which calls for* plenty of poetic licence not to *mention a love of the absurd. The* star prize is a Polaroid PDC-2000 *digital camera, worth £2,650*.

The Polaroid PDC 40 is as *revolutionary as it looks. It can* store up to 40 exceptional 24-bit quality shots at a time before it needs downloading, or work tethered to a computer for unlimited use. The PDC 40 has fully automatic exposure and focusing as well as a built-in flash. The camera works with either Mac or IBM-compatible PC and comes with appropriate software to get you started.

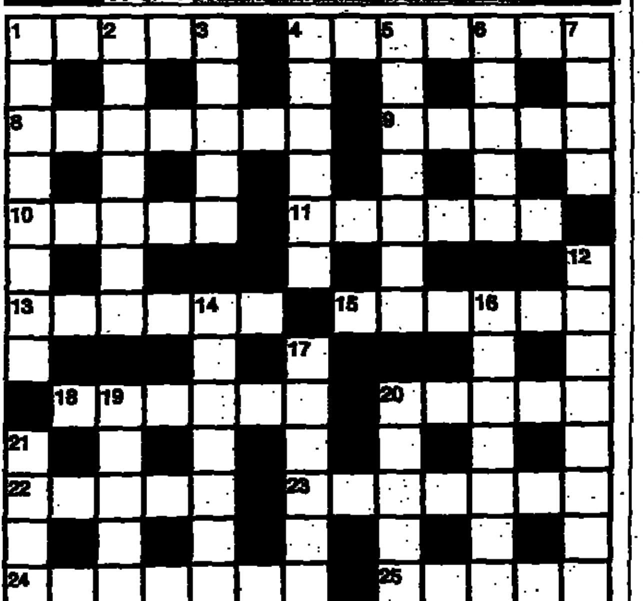
Three runners-up will win Polaroid 636 CU cameras, each worth £30. These take regular Polaroid film for instant results.

To enter, *just write a short love* poem dedicated to Bill Gates, *supernova of the computer age.* You do not have to mean it. Your *odes should be fresh, inspiring*, entertaining and, preferably, scan.

Send your poems, together with your name, address and home *telephone number, to*: Cyberspace Thirty, Computer Games and Pas*times*, Weekend, *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London El 9XN. *Your entries must reach us by* Tuesday, February 18. Normal *Times competition rules apply and* the judges will not enter into *additional correspondence*.

"Save money on cooling fans by *instructing a small child to blow* through drinking straws placed in *holes drilled around your comput*er. For more powerful systems, two *small children or one large child* may be required." Top Tip from M. Wheeler of Preston, Lancs.

The star prize in Cyberspace Thirty is a Polaroid digital camera, worth £2,650



No 1006

ACROSS
1 Entry recording sum owed (5)
4 Part of Greece; ideal rural country (7)
8 The Waltz King (7)
9 Climb up (5)
10 *Be mean with; spell (of* work) (5)
11 Annual dog show (6)
13 Strongly encourage (6)
15 Insipid; dry (6)
18 Sick feeling (6)
20 Damaged: penniless (5)
22 *(Illicit)* love affair (5)
23 The boss *(slang)* (3,4)
24 Be forced back (7)
25 Excavated; seeded with bombs (5)

DOWN
1 Serious misfortune, failure (8)
2 Polish (7)
3 Have confidence in: financial vehicle (5)
4 NE France region, by Rhine (6)
5 Calculate (7)
6 Intimidate (by difficulty) (5)
7 *High male voice* (4)
12 Allowed to go free (8)
14 Shyness; spare supply (7)
16 Ideal but impractical (7)
17 Small (oft. scented) bag (6)
19 Up (eg in rigging) (5)
20 Twig broom (5)
21 Just; *middling* (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1005

ACROSS: 1 Divided 5 Prig 9 Atlas 10 Dragoon 11 Rabble-rouser 12 Cloudy *13 Frolic 16* Matter-of-fact 19 Bouncer 20 Opera 21 Dyke 22 Eternal

DOWN: 1 Drab 2 Volcano 3 Disobedience *4 Dudley* 6 Roots 7 Generic 8 Labour of love 12 Camp bed 14 Lectern 15 Soirée 17 Truck 18 Gaol/Jail

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TIMES COMPUTER CROSSWORDS by David Akenhead — Crosswords on Computer 3.5 diskette (over 60 crosswords each, solo/team facility and optional HELP levels). Includes: Times Crosswords (19) - Omnibus 1 & 2 (2 - 2). The Times Concise (4) The Times Two (5) —The Times Jubilee Edition 1932-87 (1). (Brackets denote number of diskettes)

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THE LISTENER CROSSWORD

No 3395: A-maze-ing by The Tall'n

THE GRID is a partially-constructed maze, with bars representing locked doors which open in either direction. First complete the maze by putting in answers in pencil, adding bars at the end of words in the normal way. Its 180 degrees symmetry will help in the completion of the maze. Clues to thematic lights have no definition part. All other answers are in Chambers 1993, including two abbreviations.

Once the maze is complete, find the path from the entrance (top left) to the centre and gain entry to it. You can move freely along a row in either direction, except where a door (vertical bar) prevents this; but you can only go from one row to another through a door *(horizontal bar). The locked doors can only be opened if there is a* key in the entrance square: pick up the key, leaving the square blank, open the door, pass through and add the key to the square on the other side, for it will not be needed again. Beware of "trap-doors", where a key is available, but which lead to a dead end.

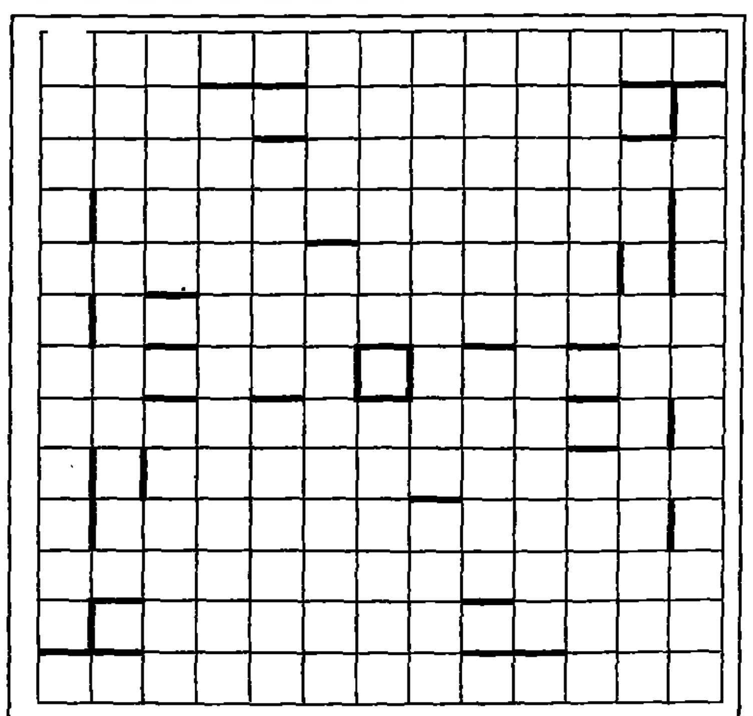
Having entered the centre of the maze, retrace your steps by following a famous story-line, using the blank squares as a guide: then ink in the final form of the maze (including all the symmetrical bars discovered earlier) and indicate the storyline. *Numbers need not be added.*

ACROSS

1	*Little boy, after being followed, is given a nap*
5 & 12a	Police to enter Chinese castle on tour abroad
10	*Weight of arriving African ruler*
12	See 5a
14	Blushing — not unknown in front of one's windows
16	Direct a course about some stunted recoiling plant
19	Heartless trickster becomes more intimate with the old
20	Meadow-grass by a river
21	Fuel once allowed to escape from a little hole
22	*Barking is indeed place for retirement*
24	Pulses racing in shoulders
27	Pepper French lawyer with appeals at the outset
28	Country formed at the end of Second World War
29	Bird that is following Highland lad
30	Heroin in the centre
31	A word of familiar address is accepted by king in French language
32	The old women bow
34	*Leave without opening the wooden coffer*
35	Being alert, Bob stops vehicle running back
38	*Dutch have odd ears in Spring*
40	Start of trouble after fly found in house wine
41	*Scottish supplement (take it for a prank)*
43	Lassie held by one arm is Daphne
47	*Lichen is rich in oil, not iodine*
48	Hero getting out of hole developed scar tissue from injury
51	See 18d
52	Return of cuckoo implying severe problem
53	Tries to comprehend direction in which bodies travel
54 & 13d	Alter tiny branch? Yes, make wholesale changes

DOWN

1	Ian's taste in fish
2	Our foreign relative contracts disease
3	Former name of Betty on Coronation Street
4	See the sights of Scottish valley, avoiding the Loch
5	Entertain, for instance members of Lily's family
6	*One takes millions for Crown*
7	Nothing in marshy area is watered
8	*Empty shoe*
9	Pass up collection of animals
11	Every third form cad took back row
13	See 54a
15	Bed of rock containing European, not American railroad line
17	Islander makes 1d - an old penny
18 & 51a	*Add colour to evergreen glades*
23	Yanks get away from cops to meet a priest
25	*Sloth of one taking car without needing to*
26	Circus performer, defying gravity, causes squeal of fright
27	The warden's field is covered by tarpaulins
33	Always right after the night before
35	In *Dundee*, little cakes are not even producing distinctive flavours
36	*Standard government control*
37	European lady has turned up in the same place before
38	Things said by captain after revolution
39	Prince popular in tropical season
42	The French horn is audible in ravine
44	Unaccompanied part-song gives joy
45	Wonderful on Lady Day
46	American carnivore has not a single hair
49	This gadget has no key . . .
50	*. . . and alters the level of proficiency attained*



LISTENER CROSSWORD No 3395
in association with Waterstone's

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Cut out and send the completed crossword and coupon above to The Listener Crossword No 3395, 63 Green Lane, St Albans, Hertfordshire AL3 6HE, by Thursday, February 13.

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
	E	!	G	R	O	U	P	W	I	T	H	A	N
1	N	O	N	E	T	S	E	I	N	E	E	M	E
2	O	B	A	M	E	E	R	O	V	E	R	N	W
3	R	E	T	A	R	D	P	H	E	R	O	I	C
4	E	D	E	N	C	R	E	E	R	K	N	A	R
5	T	E	G	U	E	I	N	E	T	I	S	R	I
	F	L	O	R	L	A	D	S	E	S	H	E	C
6	A	L	M	U	G	L	I	M	B	T	A	S	K
7	E	R	A	S	E	A	C	E	R	T	W	E	E
8	B	O	N	I	N	G	U	C	A	R	R	A	T
9	D	D	I	C	T	A	L	O	T	O	A	L	B
10	L	E	A	E	L	I	A	N	A	N	I	M	A
	U	O	C	R	E	N	R	E	V	A	T	–	T

Solution to No 3392: Boundary by Apex

Boundary — Group with a new cricket bat — Taverner could be after one!
Column B — Invertebrata (I+BAT TAVERNER anag.)

Notes to clues

ACROSS
1 nonet (rev); se-i-n-e; eme(u). 2 ob-a (rev); r-over. 3 retard(y); he-ro-i-c. 4 Eden (anag); cree(p); knar (rev). 5 *iegu (hidden,rev); e-in-e; Tisri (hidden). 6 a-L-mug;* l-I'm-b; t-ask. 7 eras (hidden); ace-r; t-w-ee. 8 bon-in-g; c-*a-rr-at. 9 i-c-tal(e); alb (hidden). 10 lea(d); Elian (anag);* a-nim-A.

DOWN COLUMNS
1 be-dell; rode-o. 2 gnat (rev); egomaniac; (a-co-game-in (anag). 3 reman (rev)urus (hidden); ice-r. 4 tencel-gentle (t+Len Reg elect (anag). 5 (a b)used; rial (rev). 6 perpendicular (perpend+a-(g)irl (anag) around cu. 7 Esme (hidden); c-one. 9 te+er (rev); ki-s-t; trona (anag). 10 heronshaw; (when ro has (anag). 11 amn (anag) +i+A; re-seal.

The winner is Roger Robinson of Essex.

The five runners-up are J.Gibb of Twickenham; M.Grimwood Taylor of Ashbourne, Derbyshire; *D.Shenton of Ross and Cromarty; H.Hodges of* Devizes, Wiltshire; T.Phillips of Worcester.

W
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LADIES

AFFECTIONATE, attractive slim widow hoping to fall for romantic personable widower, 55-65, public school important. Reply only if intend loving permanent partnership. London/ M4 corridor. Box 2922 ✍

ARE you a charismatic self made n/s businessman at home working anywhere in Europe and speaking several languages, likes travel, theatre, gourmet cuisine, music, swimming etc and have a zest for living, then you are like me. To have a committed, loving, sincere, relationship all we need is the X Factor chemistry! I hope you will phone me. Minimum height 6', 40 - 50. Photograph please. Bristol. Box No 2900 ☎ ✍

AUDACIOUS & real zest for living, successful eye catching widow WLTM successful full of life, getup & go man, 45-65, tall & confident. London/Home Counties. Reply to Box No 2923

AVON calling. Meet someone special with Elite Introductions. Call Chris now in Bristol on 0117 9736663 open 7 days

BATH area professional lady, 45, homeowner, mother of 2 young adults now has increasing freedom to indulge interests. Golf, theatre, food & wine. Would relish new experiences but really needs that someone to share them with. Photo please to Box No 2889 ✍

BEAUTIFUL (outwardly & inwardly), sincere, spontaneous & loving lady, creative & cultured WLTM intelligent, nurturing man, loving & successful in life's experience, 50-65 who wants a friend & lover to enhance his life. London/ Oxon/ Bucks/Berks. Photo/tel no. to Box No 2885 ☎ ✍

BERKS, Bucks, Oxon, Herts. Gentlemen! Why write to one lady when Elite Introductions have 100's waiting to meet you. 0500 003444 (Oxon call 01869 337373) 7 days

BLONDE prof. 47, pretty, warm, caring, cultured, well travelled loves theatre, good food, good wine and good conversation. WLTM kind, sincere prof man 45-60 for lasting relationship/ marriage. Brighton. Willing to relocate Reply to Box 2915 ☎ ✍

BOURNEMOUTH 20m radius, why contact one lady, reverse the odds, we have hundreds locally. Ring the No 1, Elite Introductions 01202 891500

BRIGHT, attractive, long time widow blonde, slim, 5'4, whose life has been focused on career and children who are now grown up. Still in an executive position, I WLTM a tall attractive professional man 50-55ish, who like me has social circles, generally in partners and you wish you had your own partner. I lead a busy professional life, like dressing well, wining, dining, theatre, swimming, reading autobiographies and my family want me to meet someone to make me happy. Merseyside/ Lancashire/ Cheshire location. Bx 2943 ☎ ✍

THE TIMES
cannot guarantee that respondents will receive a reply when answering advertisements on this page, although we hope that as a matter of courtesy they will. When making contact with people for the first time it is advisable to meet in a public place and let a member of your family or a trusted friend know where you will be. We would advise readers and advertisers to exercise caution when giving out personal details. This will be respected by genuine respondents.

BRIGHT, pretty, fair haired graduate female 34, yet to meet Mr. Right. Seeks tall, honest, witty graduate male 30-38. Photo please. North West England. Reply to Box No 2842 ✍

BRIGHT, busy, attractive would-be champagne Socialist, 44 seeks tallish principled N/S soulmate, 40-56. Beds area. Photo please to Box No 2941 ☎ ✍

BROMLEY/Dartford/SE London /Kent. Looking for that special person? Why make 100 calls when one will do. Call Elite Introductions 0181 658 7576

CAMBRIDGE/East Anglia. Join Elite Introductions locally. Freecall now 0500 103410

CHAOTIC entertaining lady London mad on Shakespeare, musician, solvent seeks warm-hearted thinking man, 48-60. Tel no please to Box No 2770 ☎ ✍

CLASSY, caring lady with GSOH mid 50's WLTM smart, tactile, articulate gent to share life. Interests include theatre, gardening, walking, music. North-west. Tel no. to Box No 2965 ✍

COMPANION sought for slender, solvent widow, 55. London. Please Reply to Box No 2855

CULTURED, cuddly, pretty blonde, solvent, N/S, intelligent, affectionate & world travelled. Seeking someone kind & sincere (50-65) to care for & share with. South. Please Reply with photo to Box No 2892 ☎ ✍

DELECTABLE, demure & dainty but no dummy! Petite, pretty blonde business consultant, GSOH, divorced, no ties. Enjoys good wine & food, theatre & opera. WLTM attractive intelligent gentleman of substance, late 40's to early 60's for meeting of minds, fun, & meaningful relationship. London based. Letter/photo to Box No 3016 ☎ ✍

DEVON/Somerset. The Agency for professionals. Personal. Secure. Confidential. Elite Introductions 01458 210120

FAIR Maiden, 5'7", slim, very attractive, loves dancing & yoga WLTM genuine intelligent Knight, GSOH. London/SE, 35-45. Photo essential. Box 2975 ✍

FEMININE attractive lady seeks smart, caring professional/ business gent 50+ with GSOH for dining out, country weekends, holidays. Co Durham/N Yorks. Please Reply with photo to Box No 2970 ✍

FUN-LOVING, fit, active blonde WLTM sincere man with GSOH, 50-60 for walks, pub lunches, music & laughter. London/ Home Counties. Reply with photo/tel no. to Box No 3026

GATWICK 15 mile radius + Croydon. Local confidential service for people seeking genuine partners. Call Claire at Elite Introductions 01883 744405

GO DUTCH! Attractive prof lady, slim, young 40's, warm, good fun. Seeks male friend who is kind, reliable, intelligent, broadminded & witty for occasional nights out. Oxon/ London. Reply to Box No 2913 ✍

GORGEOUS, fit, redhead successful City something, 5'3, 33. If you are 30-40, tall, handsome, accomplished, adventurous And available I'm looking for an appreciating asset. Photo guarantees reply. Box No 3007 ☎ ✍

GTR MANCHESTER - Surrounding area. Still looking for someone special? Elite Introductions can help call now 0161 628 3518 open 7 days

HAPPY New Love, West Midlands, Warwickshire, Staffordshire. Meet someone special from over 700 local members. Call Elite Introductions now open 7 days Freecall 0500 003444

IRISH Eyes Southern Ireland Attractive, successful widow, stylish petite blonde, a woman of substance, well travelled, WLTM tall attractive professional widower, 50-65 years. Must be gregarious, into food, music, horses. Accompanying photo will be answered. Please Reply to Box No 2906 ✍

I used to laugh a lot not a care in the world, a 5'7 Baby Boomer who thought life was for living. Africa, Australia, America, so much to see. Taittinger, Dom Perignon, Beethoven, langoustines, Trader Vics and Clapton, tweeds or silk, jeans or Chanel what happened? Who was it? Why did it stop? Do you like a challenge? Can you make me shine again? Can you help me to live again I do hope so, I have so much to give. Willing to travel. Reply Box No 2888 ☎ ✍

LONDON based slim brunette, 37, reformed workaholic, now enjoys life, theatre and eating out, seeks man to share laughter, good times and more. Photo appreciated and returned. Please Reply to Box No 2968 ✍

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LET the sunshine in! Slim, blue eyed brunette, 5'8", attractive widow (49), backgammon player needs opponent. Crazy about music (all kinds)? Passionate about all life's goodies on offer? Tallish, brown eyed handsome man, with all the Mr. Right qualities a woman could ask for? Well, don't just sit there! Drop me a line (with photo) or give me a call. Cotswolds. Box 2919 ☎ ✍

NOTTS/Leics/Lincs Valentine we have 100's of quality ladies. Call now for free details - Elite Introductions 0115 937 6104

M K/Northants/Beds Looking for that special person? They may already be a member of Elite Freecall 0500 224794

POET, professional lady, interested in art, literature, psychology, seeks friendship with independent, cultured man 50+. Londonbased. Photo/tel no. Reply to Box No 3023 ☎ ✍

PROFESSIONAL lady, just 38, attractive, affectionate, slim blue eyed blonde, 5ft 6", GSOH, WLTM sincere professional man, similar age, preferably tall, intelligent, reasonably good looking, caring and genuine for friendship, possibly more. SW London based. Enjoys travel, tennis, theatre, music and a good life style. Photo please. Reply to Box 3024 ✍

PROFESSIONAL F, 31 North East seeks genuine man for dinner, walks, theatre and Box 3011 ✍

ROMANTIC very attractive slim, fit lady, 48, varied interests WLTM professional gent 50+ to spend time doing things we both enjoy. London based. Photo please to Box No 2877 ✍

ROMEO, Romeo where art thou? Please hurry 'cause I hate heights! Bring a ladder to rescue me. My Romeo must have a wonderful sense of humour, unpretentious, tactile, honest & fit. His reward is a caring, very warmhearted, fun loving, sensuous, petite & slim 37 yr old pretty Juliet with boundless energy for life. London/Home Counties. Please Reply to Box No 2944 ☎ ✍

SCATTY (occasionally), solvent, sociable Widow, 65 (ouch!), sensitive, seeks similar tall, slim, N/S widower with SOH to share towing new Caravan for short trips UK; if suited, then longer abroad (any round French chateaux?). My car or yours (if can tow, 1600 kg) fit, good sight, clean license, practical - of course - but a kind, caring, educated conversationalist 60+ would be a bonus! Object: A little carefree fun over a year or two, before going our separate ways if settling down to dignified old age together doesn't appeal! Harrow area. Reply to Box No 2972 ☎ ✍

STEVENAGE/all S G postcodes. Join Elite Introductions locally. Freecall 0500 103410

STYLISH & classy, very attractive Iranian lady 35 N/S, sincere & romantic WLTM attractive, successful, professional bachelor, any nationality 36-45 for meaningful relationship. London based. Photo/tel no. please. Box No 2909 ☎ ✍

SURREY men 30-65 yrs required for our extensive ladies membership. Call Mike at Close Encounters 01932 783165

SUSSEX, East and West. Still looking for the right partner? We can help. Call Nigel at Elite Introductions 01273 270975

TALL, slim caring professional lady, East Sussex seeks similar interesting man, 50-60. Reply to Box 2963 ✍

THOROUGHLY nice woman, intelligent, stylish, fun loving, attractive, financially OK, NW London, seeks similar, tallish man (55-70) for lasting romance. Photo/tel no. appreciated. Box No 2647 ✍

VALENTINE born, beauty and brains, Polish lady, 33, fuller figure, seeks romantic, sincere, loyal, mature, wealthy gentleman for future together/ marriage. No Casanovas or time wasters please. Reply Box 2917 ✍

WARM sincere, fun loving, attractive, successful, slim 5'9 brunette, professional lady. 39, enjoys travel, theatre, sport, dining. WLTM intelligent, tall, prof n/s gentleman with GSOH to enjoy same interests and embark on family life. Surrey/London area. Photo appreciated. Reply Box 2965 ☎ ✍

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WARM stylish prof woman, seeks warm lively, unpretentious professional/businessman, 45-55. Northants. Reply Box 2966 ☎ ✍

WORKAHOLIC Asian Princess, young 36, Herts, seeks level-headed fun therapist. Please Reply to Box No 2984 ✍

LOVELY gay woman, 55, tall, blonde, independent, likes arts, travel, dancing. Seeks romantic relationship based on trust. London based. Box No 2897 ☎ ✍

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AHA I'll sweep you off your feet! Box Bissell brandishing N/S publisher (Kew). Well educated, slim, easy going, wicked SOH, loves Paris, Spain, cafe society, theatre, cinema, dining out, music. Seeks vivacious 30ish feminine female to share fun & possibly life. London/ Home Counties. Photo please. Please Reply to Box No 2907 ✍

AIRLINE Captain (longhaul), 46, laid-back, happy, athletic, attractive, (reportedly), graduate, miscellaneous good qualities, seeks intelligent, successful, tactile, athletic, amiable female 34-44 Berks/ rest of the world. Bx 2962 ☎ ✍

ARE you fun, attractive & genuine like me? 6ft, 38, single, sociable, educated, enjoying the good things in life (skiing, riding, food, etc.) Northants. Photo appreciated. Box 2704 ☎ ✍

ASSERTIVE, attractive, strong lady (preferably no ties), 34-50 sought by self employed businessman, 37, very independent most of the time, who he can love, worship & adore forever. Enjoys opera, keep fit, mountain bikes, etc. NW/anywhere. Photo please. Box No 3006 ✍

A Tall, slim, solvent, multi-lingual, tactile, fun guy into sailing, travel and home, seeks solvent, kindred spirit 40-50ish for shared TLC. Photo essential. Please Reply to Box No 2754 ✍

BACHELOR Oxford graduate, fit, young looking 41, attractive, solvent reserved N/S seeks lady for fun, marriage, family. London/Surrey. Box No 2946 ✍

BALLROOM dancing lessons partner sought by engaging East Surrey guy in 2nd term of learning. 6'3", slim, 43. You - slim, N/S of any age, the taller the better. Photo an advantage. Please Reply to Box No 2938 ✍

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CLEVER man, novelist, polymath, 55, physically fit, WLTM similar lady Scotland Bx 2902 ☎ ✍

CONFIDENT, relaxed, very attractive slim 5'11" man, fun loving & romantic, own homes & company, enjoys countryside pursuits, extensive travel, all sports. WLTM similar slim leggy lady 28-38 with or without children who is seeking that special man to share everything with. Surrey/ Warwickshire. Photo essential returned with mine. Box 2999 ☎ ✍

CURVACEOUS educated lady under 5'6", 26-36? Strong male, 42, dry SOH, no ties would value your companionship. Interests: country sports, motor bikes etc. Yorks/Midlands. Photo please. Box No 2890 ☎ ✍

FASCINATING and unique profession comes with this entrepreneur along with a delightful central London home. I am seeking an attractive, sensuous lady (ideally) between 25-45 for a loving, magical, lasting relationship. Box No 3020 ☎ ✍

GATWICK 15 mile radius + Croydon. Local confidential service for people seeking genuine partners. Call Claire at Elite Introductions 01883 744405

GENEROUS good looking widower (Jewish) 60s, 5'4, loving, seeks petite, attractive, educated, slim, London lady under 58. Loves classical music & theatre. Box 2950 ✍

GENTLEMAN of warmth & intelligence, 45, tall & attractive, seeks an affectionate & feminine lady, 35-45 for romance. Lives near north London/ Herts. Reply to Box No 2977 ✍

GOOD LOOKING assertive, kind hearted, generous, successful gentleman, aged 44 WLTM a very good looking feminine lady under 40 who would wish to enjoy a luxurious lifestyle in a fun one to one relationship. Recent photo and telephone number ensures reply. London/Home counties but willing to travel. Box No 2929 ☎ ✍

GOOD LOOKING professional man, 35, tall, slim, dark hair, green eyes, friendly, romantic, content with life. Likes theatre, films, sea air & countryside. Seeks pretty lady for friendship, laughter & romance. London/South. Box No 2883 ✍

GOOD-LOOKING man, 43, graduate, various cultural interests including theatre and classical music, seeks attractive woman for friendship, tenderness, joyful romps and lasting love. London area. Box No 2811 ✍

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HERTFORDSHIRE - Gentleman BC, 60 N/S, retired WLTM lady similar background. Interests music, countryside. Photo please to Box No 2925 ✍

HOW often does an opportunity like this arise for you to meet a mature, N/S independent man with a positive life style. The answer is now, so why don't you a woman, with similar background & good looks, send me a photo & phone number with your reply & I look forward to saying hello. London based. Box No 2924. ✍

INTELLIGENT, successful, professional, tall, well travelled male, with GSOH, 35, London based. Enjoys sailing, country walks, jazz, wining, dining. You should be 27-36, attractive, slim, confident, cultured & have similar interests & a zest for life & adventure. Photo/tel no. appreciated. Reply to Box No 2939 ✍

INTERNATIONAL businessman living in central London and working in the South of France, Los Angeles and Singapore is looking for that special girl to share his good life. I am free, sincere and sophisticated, I love travel, theatre, restaurants and clubs. You must be outgoing and very attractive aged between 22-29. Photo and phone number essential please. Reply to Box No 2908 ☎ ✍

KIND, loving, tall professional gent, 26, N/S, seeks a charismatic, stylish and well educated lady, 23-33 to enjoy the finer things in life, days in the country, Pimms on the river, eating in and dining out. If it sounds like fun, get in touch. Reply to Box No 2800 ✍

KIND, romantic, professional gentleman, good looking, 6', GSOH, 58, varied interests: country life, the arts, WLTM elegant, slim, curvaceous, affectionate professional lady, 35-45 Photo Midlands Bx 2995 ✍

LIKEABLE and sincere prof/executive male, 42, no ties. Smart appearance. Varied interests inc foreign travel and languages, seeks younger, attractive, intelligent well spoken n/s lady for permanent mutually rewarding and supporting relationship S Glos/N Wilts Photo/phone number Please reply Box no 2808 ☎ ✍

LONDON-based leisure-lover, eccentric epicurean, needs to be calmed down WLTM culinary explorer for aesthetic enrichment and a decent breakfast. Box No 2979 ✍

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MUTUALLY supportive partnership, sometimes challenging, always loving, this tall, single, attractive, active, kind-hearted late 40s successful business professional would like to hear from you. London/Surrey/ Hants/Berks Bucks/Herts. Photo, own handwriting, reply guaranteed. Box No 2949 ☎ ✍

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OUTDOOR girl, who is warm, travel loving with zest for life sought by caring single dad, 36 (Sussex). Reply to Box No 2964 ✍

PERSONABLE, amiable, modest man, young 60. Seeks attractive, N/S interesting young lady 51-57. Camberley environs. Please Reply Box 2798 ✍

PROFESSIONAL, 32, successful company director, London based. Seeks relationship to share the good times. Photo please. Box No 2967 ✍

RASCAL, 38, seeks maiden for laughter, outings and general misbehaviour. G.S.O.H. essential plus photo. Willing to travel Reply Box no 2898 ☎ ✍

ROMANTIC Englishman, Public School, 49, single/independent, grown up family, very fit, hobbies outdoor sports - amateur historian WLTM sophisticated lady. N West Reply Box 2891 ☎ ✍

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TALL fit competitive single professional male, 39, seeks slim attractive soulmate to share good times & more. M25/M4. Photo/tel No. to Box No 2931 ✍

TALL, professional, happy, single, successful in business but not one to share it with. 38, dark, fit, Berks/London. Please Reply to Box No 2843 ✍

TALL, slim, solvent, late 40s, Thames Valley based professional. I'd say I'm honest, fun and unpretentious. I love my children, work, the Arts and sport. Just missing a slim, attractive late 30s+ lady. Photo appreciated. Reply Box 3008 ☎ ✍

VISUAL, creative architect, young 67, London, seeks visual creative woman Box 2981 ☎ ✍

WIDOWER, retired professional 71 yr old, tall, N/S, wealthy, seeks sharing, cherishing relationship with lady. Glos and bordering counties. Box 2910 ✍

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YOUTHFUL, older man, (50), seeks sincere younger woman for lots of cuddles and travel in the sun. I am solvent, unconventional, tactile, divorced. If you have no ties and could be my soulmate please write with photo. Reply Box 2886 ✍

YOUTHFUL widower, 60's, retired Cambridge engineer, country & cultural pursuits, seeks slim, well dressed, intelligent loving lady under 60, living within 30-40 miles from Stamford Lincs. Photo please. Box No 2872 ✍

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GENTLEMAN, 32, sensitive, kind GSOH, enjoys classical music, good food/wine, conversation, pubs, politics & current affairs. Seeks similarly nice young gentleman for friendship, potential relationship. London based. Photo please to Box No 2878 ✍

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7th French restaurant Mayfair
9th Lunch at top Mayfair restaurant
11th Buzzy London restaurant
12th England v Italy

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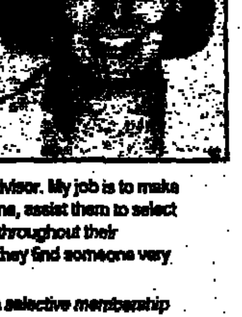
21st Comedy Club Camden
21st Restaurant East Barnet
21st West End Musical
22nd Dinner Leicester & house party
22nd Private Belgravia dinner club
25th Top London restaurant
27th Restaurant Milton Keynes
28th Country Club Rutland
28th Celebrity lunch London

HELLO! I'm Linda!



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Love, Linda

P.S. Regards to all our ex members.

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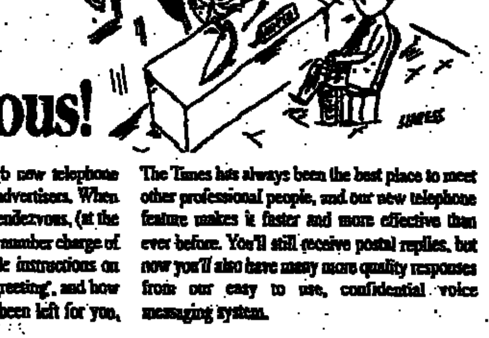
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Car fun on the ground for the high-flying drivers

Page 3

THE TIMES

CAR 97

Expensive chapter closes on a once great name

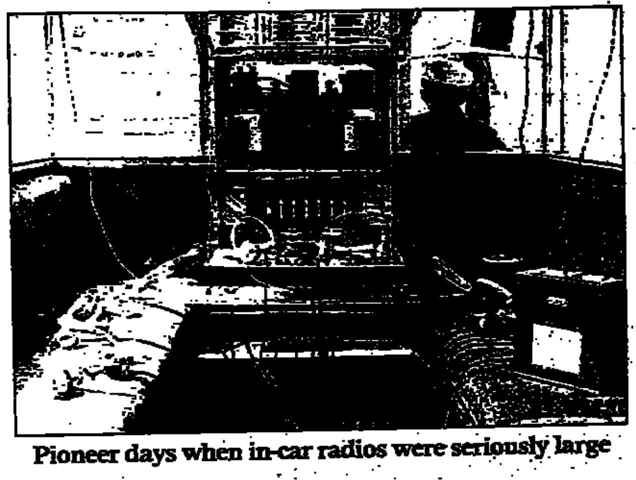
Page 10

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 1 1997

We shall have music wherever we go . . . **Kevin Eason** looks at in-car entertainment from Mrs Duveen to NXT

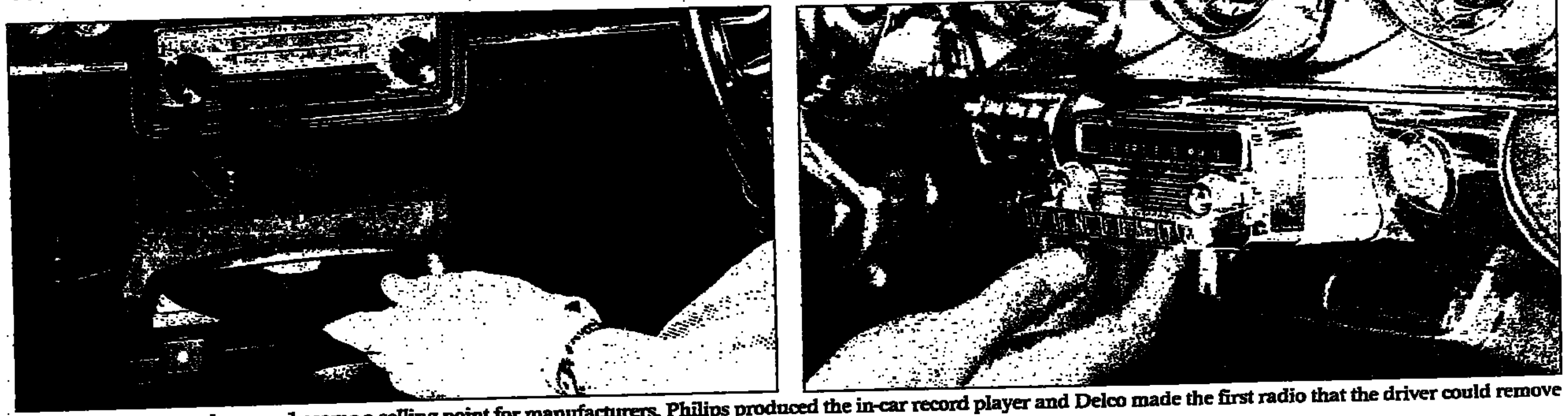
And you no longer need that tree to plug into

ADVERTISING ARCHIVES



Pioneer days when in-car radios were seriously large

Switched on to the first Philips car radio in 1934



As entertainment on the move became a selling point for manufacturers, Philips produced the in-car record player and Delco made the first radio that the driver could remove

1914: Student Alan Thomas equipped a Model T Ford, stationary and earthed, with overhead aerials in Toronto.

1927: Philadelphia Storage Battery Co — Philco — launched the first commercial set for cars in the United States.

1933: The first popular car radio in Britain was the six-valve HMV Super-set, priced at 17 guineas — £17.73p today.

1934: The first British car available with factory-installed radio was the Hillman Melody Minx — which came complete with a harp mascot on the bonnet.

There was a time when it would have been easier to hire Geraldo and his band to sit in the back seat of your car than to switch on the radio.

Once the car had been invented, people soon discovered that conversation had a limited life on a journey of any length. With the arrival of broadcasting, the obvious solution was to fit a radio into the car. Obvious, yes. Easy, very definitely not, as the pioneers proved.

Not only was the equipment bulky — with valves, headphones, Bakelite switches and speakers as big a fridge — but it was invariably unreliable. Chances of hearing the plummy tones of the BBC crackling into life were as great as West Ham winning the Premier League. Yet today, you can forget Geraldo and have everything from the London Symphony Orchestra to the Beatles blasting from speakers as thin as a piece of paper, all controlled from a push-button box of tricks that will fit into your pocket.

The beginnings of what we now call "in-car entertainment" can be traced back to 1914 when student Alan Thomas fitted his Model T Ford with a complex of huge overhead aerials. The first drawback, though, was that the car had to stand still — and it had to be earthed. Not exactly music on the move.

Eight years on, Britain edged into the wireless age when a two-valve Burndept set was installed in a new Cadillac coupé for Mrs Geoffrey Duveen. Unfortunately, Mrs Duveen's chauffeur had to sling a 50ft aerial between the car roof and a tree to pick up the whiskery sounds emanating from the BBC.

It was another decade before radios were considered standard equipment. Hillman fitted a car with the six-valve HMV Super-set in 1934 and proudly called it the Melody Minx.

These days, radios think for themselves, the latest generation RDS versions tuning automatically, while compact discs have transformed the quality of sound inside the car.

And British scientists have overcome the last obstacle to the bulk which still weighs down cars fitted with the latest sound systems — the speakers. New Transducers Technology, or NXT, developed by the Verity Group in Cambridgeshire, means that speakers can be flat or curved. A conventional 5ins diameter speaker cone is 3ins deep and weighs about a kilogramme — and posh cars have as many as ten. Verity's NXT version would be about an eighth of an inch thick and weigh 50 grammes. And NXT can be fitted anywhere — roof lining, sun visor — because it radiates instead of beaming sound like conventional speakers. Carmakers are lining up to buy the new technology.

The sounds of the future, it seems, will be bigger and better than ever — and, unlike Mrs Duveen, you won't even need a nearby tree.

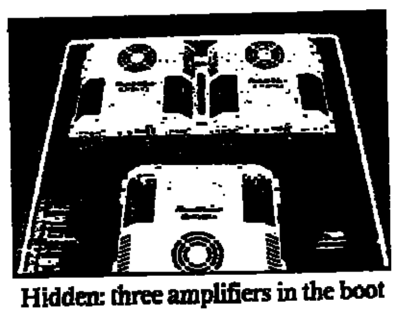
LABOUR'S TRAFFIC POLICY: PAGE 5

The Cavalier cost £11,000; the hi-tech sound system is a £15,000 extra

FROM the outside, the L-registered Vauxhall Cavalier is the sort that sales reps use to cover thousands of miles. Inside, however, is a concert hall with sound so dramatic, you could close your eyes and be sitting in the circle, *writes Vaughan Freeman*.

That sound quality costs £15,000 (the entire car only cost £11,000). But Russell Morgan, an information technology specialist, believes it was worth the investment like hundreds of others who spend fortunes on sound systems so elaborate, most homes don't have anything like them. His Cavalier's sound system won the Amateur National Final organised by the Sound Challenge Association.

Two large speakers were built into the driver and passenger side footwells while the boot is filled with a 15in diameter "sub-woofer" for rich bass. The disc changer is tucked into the glove box, but the boot is the powerhouse. The main amplifier and heavy-duty back-up battery are set in hand-made cavities lined with thin blue neon light tubes to show them off. At the touch of a television-style remote control, a tray drops down from beneath the rear shelf on hydraulic pistons, to show off two more amplifiers.



Hidden: three amplifiers in the boot

The sound is spectacular, but not the ear-shattering type which blasts from cars in every high street. Instead, it is high quality, the challenge which intrigues Morgan and Chris and Peter Huet, who run Huet Car Audio in Hove, West Sussex and installed the system.

"It's not about volume," Chris says. "You don't have to spend an awful lot of money to get a nice sound system in your car. It is extraordinary how someone might spend £40,000 on their car and £5,000 on their home hi-fi system, but then put up with the sound system in their car installed by the manufacturer — probably the last thing that carmakers think about."

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The issues have been forgotten. Perfectly decent people only want to go to St Ives and would like to avoid sweating on the A30 for three hours

Methinks they do protest too much

DRIVEN TO DISTRACTION

Peter Barnard

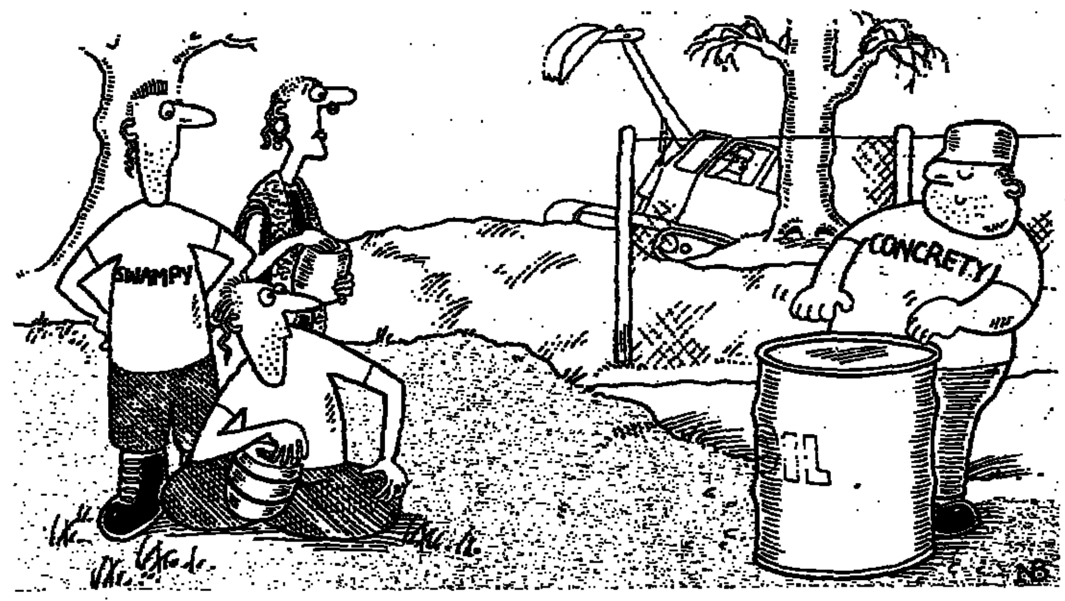
They give themselves names like Swampy and Animal and have come down out of the trees to live in tunnels. They admit, some of them, to living on unemployment benefit, to qualify for which they have to be "available for work". But, of course, they already have work, for they are roads protesters, a label they wear as if to imply that protesting against roads is a vocation all its own.

They have some of the attributes of heroes. They are, undeniably, self-sacrificing. They have belief and endurance. They are, in their way, as determined and dedicated as a Ranulph Fiennes or a Tony Bullimore. But those fine men took on Nature: Swampy and Animal have taken on democracy. Nature is neither enhanced nor diminished by winning or losing against a Fiennes or a Bullimore. Democracy can only be diminished if it loses out to Swampy and Animal.

The media images from Devon tempt us to side with the protesters. Men in hard hats wield sophisticated machines like the Pipehawk, designed to trace the course of underground tunnels. Zealous, sometimes over-zealous, security men gaze rigidly at those who taunt them. Swathes of countryside are flattened as if by napalm in the service of the great god Motoring.

Size, though, is not everything. The little fellah is not right because the other fellah is a bigger fellah. One of the distinguishing marks of the A30 protest is that the issues have been forgotten. Every day the reports are about the confrontation, but that is not the issue. The issue is a road — and not much of a road, at that. Most people living in London or elsewhere in the south-east of England, having decided to take a holiday in Devon or Cornwall, will look at a map and decide that, while the M4-M5 route may be quicker, the A3-A303-A30 is much shorter: London to Exeter is 205 miles by motorway and 182 miles via the A30. And look at all that dual carriageway! Great thinking, until you reach Honiton. The 10 miles or so from there to Exeter is the one serious bottleneck left on the entire trek.

All that the Highways Agency is trying to do is turn that single carriageway stutter into a dual carriageway. The normal rule — that all roads quickly fill to their capacity — does not apply. There is no demonstrable case for arguing that the Honiton-Exeter dual carriageway will simply fill up with traffic. Most of the case against the present road is not the density of traffic but the fact that overtaking is nearly impossible, thus reducing traffic flow to the speed of the slowest vehicle. Ergo, two lanes will solve the problem.



Neither does the expansion of the A30 involve knocking down vast numbers of houses or rendering homeless the last six examples on the planet of the lesser spotted greenfly. But Swampy and Animal are not interested. They are not opposed to the A30 improvement as such. What they oppose is the building of any road, anywhere, for any reason.

I have worried about Swampy and Animal all week. Unless you are a tunneler, digging a tunnel is a dangerous game and living in one is even more dangerous. I expect that Swampy and Animal and all their fellow protesters are perfectly decent young people who only want what they believe in. But they are a minority. There are plenty of perfectly decent people who only want to spend a week in St Ives this summer and would like to get there without sweating on the A30 for three hours.

The difference between these groups is not that one likes cars and the other does not. The difference is that one group, if it does not like the way the Government runs its roads policy, will do something about that at the General Election. The other group will do something about it whenever and wherever it chooses and to hell with the rest of us. I think I know which group I'm in.

AT LAST, the Ford Ka has a name that makes sense. All will be revealed next Saturday, along with the winner of Name That Ka.

A lifeline for Merseyside?

Kevin Eason

on the small people-carrier that could give Halewood a big future

Ford's carrier of hope: if the workforce accepts the changes — and the Government comes up with £70m — Halewood could make 120,000 a year

This is the car that could save Ford's plant on Merseyside. The small people-carrier — which would compete with the Renault Megane Scenic, Europe's Car of the Year — is yet to be unveiled by Ford, but the company wants to put it into production at Halewood within the next two years.

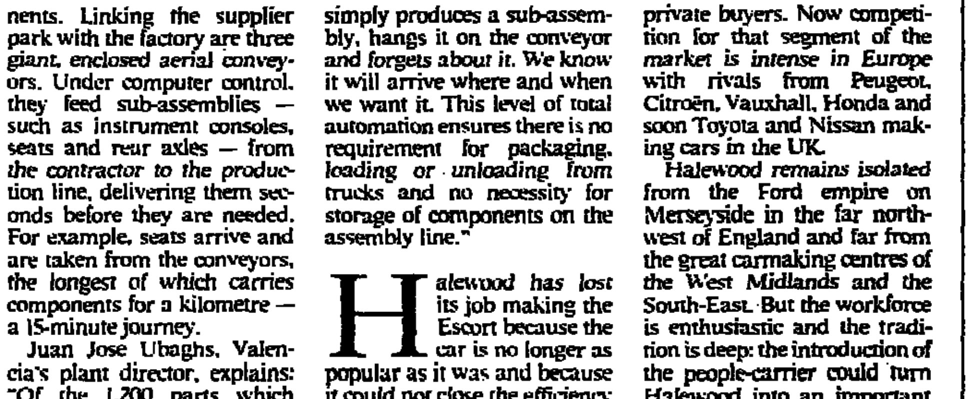
Ford rocked workers when it disclosed it would end production of the Escort at Halewood with the loss of 1,300 jobs. But the worldwide move towards making cars for niche markets could save Halewood. If the workforce accepts the changes and the Government is prepared to offer a grant of around £70m to switch assembly lines, the plant could gain the people-carrier.

Unions have doubts about Ford's commitment, but the company says that Halewood could make 120,000 people-carriers a year, not far below the annual rate of Escort production which dropped to 153,000 last year.

For Halewood, the benefit is that the new vehicle is likely to be manpower-intensive and much more profitable. Ford envisages a hatchback, based on the chassis of the Escort but capable of taking seven seats with a tall roof for extra luggage room, producing a Galaxy-style vehicle but in a hatchback size. Engines would probably be 1.8 and 2-litre versions from the present range — and made in Britain.

If unions have reservations about Ford's strategy, they should take heart from the company's Valencia plant, where workers are both colleagues and competitors for Halewood. Valencia will be one of two continental plants to make the Escort, along with Saarlouis in Germany, but the Spanish workers had to bear losing production of the Fiesta to Dagenham, Ford's huge plant in Essex. Their reward was the contract for the Ka.

Valencia has built four million Fiestas since 1976, which should have worried the Spanish workers when Ford decided to concentrate production at Dagenham, ignoring them. But Ford pumped more than £120 million into Valancia to prepare it for Ka production. What Valencia had that Halewood does not was advanced preparations for a supplier park — an industrial site which contains the companies supplying all its major components. Linking the supplier park with the factory are three giant, enclosed aerial conveyors. Under computer control, they feed sub-assemblies — such as instrument consoles, seats and rear axles — from the contractor to the production line, delivering them seconds before they are needed. For example, seats arrive and are taken from the conveyors, the longest of which carries components for a kilometre — a 15-minute journey.



Escort production at Liverpool: the days when it dominated the British market are gone

Juan Jose Ubaghs, Valencia's plant director, explains: "Of the 1,200 parts which constitute each Ka, 436 in six sub-assemblies are brought into the plant by direct automatic delivery. With the advent of more suppliers, those figures will increase to about 12 sub-assemblies. A supplier simply produces a sub-assembly, hangs it on the conveyor and forgets about it. We know it will arrive where and when we want it. This level of total automation ensures there is no requirement for packaging, loading or unloading from trucks and no necessity for storage of components on the assembly line."

Halewood has lost its job making the Escort because the car is no longer as popular as it was and because it could not close the efficiency gap on Saarlouis and Valencia. The days have gone when the Escort MkIII dominated the British car market, heading the sales charts for a decade as an automatic first choice for both company and private buyers. Now competition for that segment of the market is intense in Europe with rivals from Peugeot, Citroën, Vauxhall, Honda and soon Toyota and Nissan making cars in the UK.

Halewood remains isolated from the Ford empire on Merseyside in the far north-west of England and far from the great carmaking centres of the West Midlands and the South-East. But the workforce is enthusiastic and the tradition is deep: the introduction of the people-carrier could turn Halewood into an important part of Ford's organisation, providing a vehicle made nowhere else in Europe but still vital to Ford's attempt to win customers.

Additional reporting by Stuart Birch.

HOW MUCH TO REPAIR IT?

You pay less for an Italian fix

FIAT makes the cheapest cars to repair, while bills for Japanese models are among the highest, according to a survey by one of Britain's top accident management companies, *writes Kevin Eason*.

Velo, based in Marlow, Buckinghamshire, checked on the price of repairs from more than 50,000 company vehicles to compile its league table.

The Italians lead, with average costs below even the established Big Three in Britain — Ford, Vauxhall and Rover — who were in fourth, fifth and sixth positions, with Land Rover a surprising second. Mercedes, expected to be expensive, is in among the mass manufacturers and well in front of its rivals, Audi, BMW and Volkswagen.

Depite having European manufacturing sites, the Japanese fail the crash test. Nissan performed best, though still six places behind the Big Three and more expensive than Mercedes, while Honda and Toyota, both manufacturing in Britain, and Mazda — whose 121 model is from Ford's plant at Dagenham, Essex — prop up the table.

Velo is expert at identifying costs because fleet drivers have the worst record for accidents. Accidents in which the driver was at fault, it says, rose by 2.6 per cent last year, while there was a similar increase in cases in which the driver hit a stationary object, suggesting carelessness.

The company calculates that the average cost per claim for accidents in which no third party was involved last year was £1,720.

CAR REPAIR COSTS

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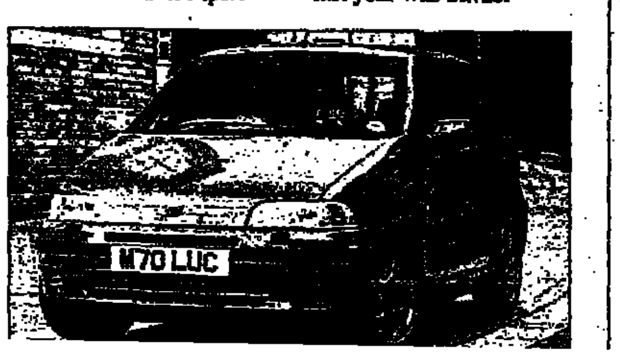
Rover	£480
Volvo	£520
Mercedes	£526
Citroën	£550
Renault	£564
Volkswagen	£580
Nissan	£596
BMW	£645
Audi	£655
Honda	£668
Saab	£700
Toyota	£734
Mazda	£788

Velo Fleet Insurance Report



● **LONDON**
M4 Major roadworks between junctions 1 (Chiswick) and 2 (Brentford). Includes work on the elevated section and the entry and exit slip roads. Also closures on the A4.
A306 Hammersmith Bridge. Closed both ways to general traffic for structural works. Expect congestion on both sides of the river.
A3 Kingston. Northbound lane closure on the Kingston bypass between Shannon Corner (A298) and Coombe Lane junction (A238).
M1 Hendon area. Major roadworks at Five Ways Corner, with no access to or from the A1 Great North Way.
A406 Upper Edmonton. Major roadworks on Angel Road (North Circular Road) over Lea Valley Viaduct.

● **SOUTH-EAST**
M40 Buckinghamshire. Roadworks with a contraflow between junctions 1a (M25) and 2 (Beaconsfield).
M27 Hampshire. Roadworks with lane closures and a contraflow at times between junctions 8 (Southampton) and 10 (Fareham).
M2 Kent. Inside lane and hard shoulder closed both ways between junctions 5 (Sittingbourne) and 6 (Faversham).
M25 Dartford, Kent. Maintenance work on the south orbital viaduct means southbound lane closure throughout the day with various off peak and overnight lane closures.
A3 near Guildford, Surrey. Hogs Back (A31) long-term roadworks at Stag Hill flyover.

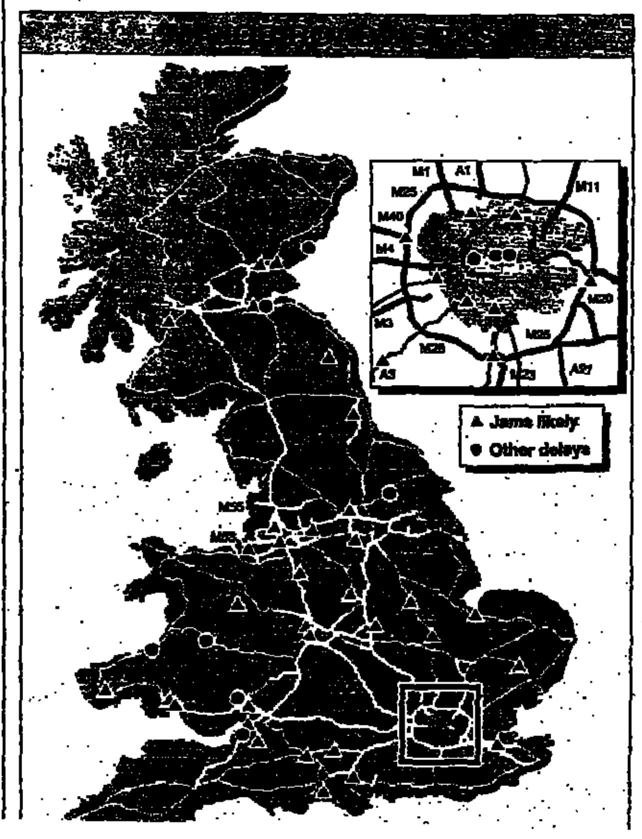
● **SOUTH-WEST**
A35 Christchurch bypass, Dorset. Lane closure between Fountain Way and Stony Lane roundabout.
M5 Gloucestershire. Major roadworks with only one lane open at roundabout junction with the A419.
M5 Gloucestershire. Contraflow across Avonmouth bridge with a 50mph limit.
A303 Andover, Hampshire. Off-peak lane closures and full overnight closures between the A3057 and the A343.

● **MIDLANDS & EAST ANGLIA**
A1 Alconbury, Cambridgeshire. Reduced to one lane northbound during maintenance work at Alconbury Hills (A14/A604), as is the A14.
A38 south of Derby. Southern bypass (A564 under construction), roadworks are in place.
A6 Leicestershire. Roadworks and a contraflow between Sawley Island and Hilton Hotel (M1 J24).
A500 Stoke area, Staffordshire. Contraflow with only one lane open each way between Talke (A34) and Longport (A527 Porthill).
M5 West Midlands. Major roadworks at junction 2 Dudley (A4034/A4123 Oldbury), closing southbound entry and northbound exit slip roads.

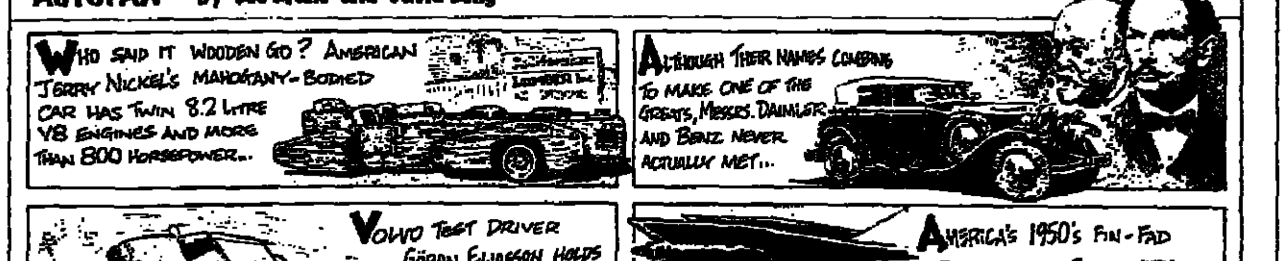
● **NORTH**
A1M Durham. Roadworks with a 50mph limit at junction 63 (Chester-le-Street, A167).
M6 Greater Manchester. Bridge maintenance work between junctions 25 (Wigan) and 27 (Standish) with a 50mph limit and narrow lanes in both directions.
M53 Merseyside. Bridge maintenance work at junction 2 (Birkenhead) with only one lane open each way on the Moreton spur.
A697 south of Wooler, Northumberland. Closed at Crawley Dean for roadworks. Signed diversions via Glanton.
M1 South Yorkshire. Carriageway reduced to two lanes in both directions between Meadowhall and Rotherham. A 50mph limit is also in place.
M1 West Yorkshire. Major roadworks continue around the Leeds junction with lane closures and speed restrictions. Expect delays on the M1, M621 and Dewsbury Road.

● **SCOTLAND**
A937 Montrose, Angus. Roadworks and restrictions in both directions on Hillside.
M8 Edinburgh. Major roadworks, with lane closures on the roundabout at junction 2 (Newbridge spur, M9).
A90 between Errol and St Madoes, Perth & Kinross. Carriageway reduced to one lane westbound for roadworks. Inside lane closed. Off-peak 9.30am-3.30pm.
A77 Symington, South Ayrshire. Southbound lane closure for roadworks, just north of the Bogend Toll.

● **WALES**
A482 Aberaeron, Ceredigion. Upper Aberaeron Bridge on South Road closed for reconstruction work. Diversions via Panteg Road and the A487.
A4076 Milford Haven, Pembrokeshire. Bridge repairs at Dinas Bridge.
A44 between Llangurig and Eisteddfa Gurig, Powys. Roadworks near Glansevern Arms.
A458 Pont Sychcoed, Cyfronydd, Powys. Temporary lights for bridge repairs, also affecting the A483.
A483 between Cadle and Penllergaer, Swansea. Off-peak northbound lane closure for roadworks.
A472 Pontypool, Torfaen. Contraflow between Pontymoile and the Heron roundabout.



AUTOFAX by Les Evans and David Long


WHO SAID IT WOODEN GO? AMERICAN JERRY NICKEL'S MAHOGANY-BODIED CAR HAS TWIN 8.2 LITRE V8 ENGINES AND MORE THAN 800 HORSEPOWER...
ALTHOUGH THEIR NAMES COMBINE TO MAKE ONE OF THE GREATS, MESSRS. DAIMLER AND BENZ NEVER ACTUALLY MET...
VOLVO TEST DRIVER GÖRAN ELIASSON HOLDS THE WORLD RECORD FOR
AMERICA'S 1950'S FIN-FAD REACHED ITS PEAK WITH THE CADILLAC FLEETWOOD

GILL ALLEN

Mark Jefferies demonstrates his bike's aerodynamic qualities, watched by Clive Davidson with his "warm and reliable" 12-year-old Polo

Down-to-earth transport for grounded flyers

Eve-Ann Prentice discovers that some pilots abandon all ideas of glamorous travel when they leave their planes

DAVID HOWELLS

Judith Wilson and Steve Jones and their Fords: "I look after mine and it is reliable . . . his is not"

When Jumbo jet co-pilot Judith Wilson leaves the cockpit after her latest long-haul flight *from Tokyo, she makes for the crew* car park at Heathrow ready to drive home. The car park may have *pristine, gleaming supercars of the* sort most airline passengers would deem fit for heroes of the air, but *Judith passes them by as she makes* for her ageing Ford Fiesta XR2i.

Meanwhile, another flying ace, *Mark Jefferies, has* just screamed earthwards in his aerobatic Yak fighter aircraft while taking part in *a death-defying display in the old* Battle of Britain skies over East Anglia. After landing back at his *farm airstrip at Little Gransden on* the Cambridgeshire-Bedfordshire border, he leaps *not* into a zippy Porsche *or* Ferrari, *but on to* a battered, rusty green bicycle.

So what do pilots — accustomed *to mastering the most powerful and* sophisticated machinery on earth — look for in a car? For many it is *not the image-enhancing upmarket* vehicles of the glossy ads. The spectre of a groomed, gold-braided jacket *and* a *manicured*, capable hand on the steering wheel of a top-of-the-range saloon is not for them.

More likely, *the pilot's car may* be strewn with overflowing ashtrays, tools and old newspapers.

"My car is used as a travelling workshop," says Judith, whose husband, Steve Jones, is also a British Airways Boeing 747-400 co-pilot. "Steve has a Sukhoi aircraft which he enters in events and we have to take lots of equipment around with us.

"I know the XR2i has a boy-racer, *joy rider type image, but it is small* and powerful and I can get my bicycle in the back."

Steve, meanwhile, runs a Ford Escort XR3i which he says is "somewhere between a sitting *room and a toolbox. It has four* seats all full of aeroplane bits, I could never carry passengers in it". *The car is practical, he says.* "It fulfils all its requirements, it is not something a burglar would want". A *sentiment Judith would agree* with: "Mine is worth about £2,000. I don't think his even registers on *any value scale. I look after mine* and it is reliable . . . his is not."

Steve does sometimes hanker after a *Ferrari*, "*but I wouldn't be* able to get all the tools in it", or "something nice and genteel like a *1920s three-litre Bentley*".

Judith, who met Steve when they were training 10 years ago, has no *such dreams . . . she is simply* stumped about how she could eventually replace her Ford. Her *XR2i does about 38mpg and the* Boeing 747-400 uses 8-10 tons of fuel an hour, so comparison be*tween work and recreation vehicles* is not so feasible.

Mark Jefferies, former British *aerobatic champion and importer* of Yak fighters from the former Soviet bloc, has been reduced to riding his rust-riddled bike since his C-reg Orion Ghia was written off after being *stolen* just before *Christmas.* "But *my* favourite transport is *my* Yak 50; it is simple, easy to fly, and has tremendous *performance,*" he says. Yaks also cost between £40,000 and £170,000.

Clive Davidson, chief flying in*structor at Shoreham airfield, loves* getting behind the controls of Harvard and Yak aircraft and likes *taking his terrestrial transport for* granted. After a day teaching the next generation of pilots the intrica*cies of stall turns and side-slipping*, Clive climbs into a 12-year-old Volkswagen Polo 1.3 with 273,000 *miles on the clock.*

"I bought it for about £1,200 *eight years ago and it is* insured for £1,500, though I doubt I would get that for *it," he says. "All I want from a car is* for it to be warm and reliable. I get my kicks travelling in the air."

None the less, his appetite has been whetted by driving in Florida, where he is currently teaching at a *flying school. "I have been lent* a five-litre Mustang soft-top and it has been offered to me to buy. But it *only does 15mpg, which is fine out* there with America's low fuel costs, so . . ."

Back at Heathrow, Judith Wilson remembers the travel disaster which has most unnerved her.

It was *not some mid-air crisis* over Kamchatka in the remote Far East, or a particularly tricky cross *wind landing at Hong Kong,* but the sinking moment that is familar to millions of earthbound mortals — the time she realised her car had been stolen.

"Steve was taking part in an air race and his aeroplane keys had been in the car" she said. "They had to hotwire the aircraft to get it going and that was among my worst moments."

COMBINATIONS OF WHEELS AND WINGS

HISTORY has seen the *fortunes of the aircraft and* motor business intertwined at almost every stage, *writes Kevin Eason. The men who pioneered* the car inevitably turned their engineering prowess to the air as soon *as they saw that the Wright* Brothers were more visionary than harebrained.

The high points were very high: such as when the carmakers turned their efforts to aero manu*facture during the Second* World War. Fighters and bombers thun*dered from their* factories in the Midlands. One of the greatest contributions came from Rolls-*Royce,* which *made the famous* Merlin engine to power the Spitfire, probably Britain's most recognisable war weapon. Post-war, Bristol started making cars while British Aerospace bought Rover in the 1980s.

But there have been lows: the first Briton killed in an air crash was C.S. Rolls, playboy, pioneer aviator and co-founder of Rolls-*Royce,* who died in 1910 and never saw his name become one of the most famous in the world of motoring.

Then there have been the attempts to combine flying and driving, like the hapless 1973 Aircar, a combination of Ford Pinto and Cessna Skymaster. Now, if you were choosing the *ideal* donor car, the Pinto would not be the first to spring to mind. Nevertheless, the project went ahead with an elaborate arrangement to attach the Cessna wings and stabilizers to the "fuselage" of the Pinto. Unfortunately, the only way for this project was down: the car/plane broke up on its first drive/flight and was never heard of again.

'The Grand Cherokee has become a symbol of success'

The fight is on as the Laredo rides into town, says **Helen Mound**

Just when you thought there couldn't possibly be *any more* new off-roaders destined for British roads, Jeep has come up with a real *gem which* will unnerve Mitsubishi Shogun and Land Rover Discovery *dealers;* its *cheapest luxury* 4x4 ever.

Named after the Texan town, the new Jeep Grand Cherokee Laredo is every *bit as stylish* as a Shogun, as accomplished as a Discovery — and at least £5,000 cheaper than either..

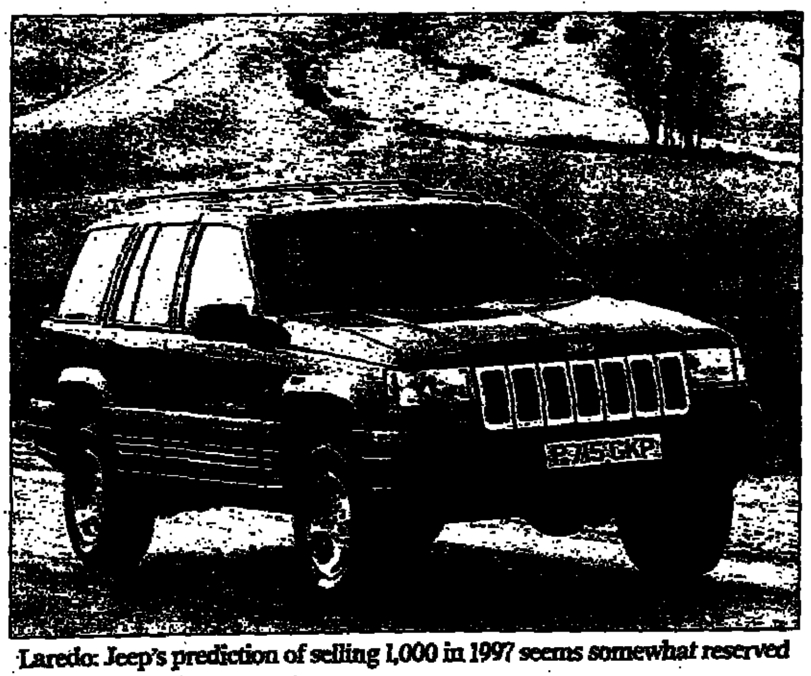
The Laredo comes in response to Ford's assault last year on Jeep's monopoly of *American* 4x4 sales in the UK. Since arriving in Britain three years ago, Jeep has been enjoying a *staggering growth in sales* and Ford decided it wanted a share. Ford introduced the £25,870 Explorer, so Jeep was *swift* to launch the £26,495 Laredo, which goes on sale this week.

The Laredo has two *advantages over* its rival: first, it's available in four-litre petrol with an automatic gearbox and *permanent* four-wheel *drive*, or 2.5-litre turbo diesel with manual gears and switchable four-wheel *drive* (the Explorer is a four-litre petrol only off-roader). And it is European-built (the Explorer is made in the US), which means styling and trim are nearer British tastes.

The Grand Cherokee range *amounts to four models,* the 4.0 and 5.2 Limited, and the two Laredos. Apart from the *availability of the turbo diesel* engine, the Laredos and Limiteds are mechanically identical. *The major difference* is what Jeep refers to as a "subtle realignment" of specification — so subtle, you can't help wondering why anyone would bother paying the £3,000 extra for a 4.0 Limited *instead of* a 4.0 Laredo.

The petrol and turbo diesel Laredos benefit from luxuries such as *air-conditioning,* electric windows, power steering, cruise control and alloy wheels. *Safety features include twin front* airbags, anti-lock brakes, remote central locking, immobiliser and alarm.

The *turbo diesel Laredo is* likely to be the more popular of the two, not only because it is Jeep's only diesel *Grand Cherokee*, but because of its impressive fuel economy. Last year a Grand fitted with the turbo *diesel* engine covered 900 miles from the engine plant in Italy to London on less than a tank of *fuel*, achieving an average of 58.4mpg.



Laredo: Jeep's prediction of selling 1,000 in 1997 seems *somewhat reserved*

CHEROKEE LAREDO

Engine: 2499cc four-cylinder turbo diesel; 3960cc six-cylinder petrol.

Transmission: Five-speed manual and part-time 4WD; four-speed automatic and permanent 4WD.

Performance: Max speed, 97mph/ 112mph; 0-60mph, 13.9 secs/9.9 secs.

Explorer: leading Ford's British attack

When Jeep introduced the Grand Cherokee in March last year, *it hoped* to sell 3,000 by December; that figure was achieved in October. To date, orders have reached 5,000 and *the* Grand has become the UK's-best selling petrol-engined 4x4. With results like that, *Jeep's prediction* to sell 1,000 Laredos in 1997 seems somewhat reserved, but the company *says the figure has* more to do with a limited supply than demand. Such is the Grand Cherokee's popularity in Europe that a third *production shift has* been scheduled at the assembly plant in Graz, Austria.

The Grand *has* a pleasing mix between tall off-roader and car-like dimensions; it stands out from the crowd without being too big for busy cities. It cruises comfortably, although the diesel can get *rather noisy* if *pushed much* above 70mph.

If you're brave enough to take your cherished Grand off-road, you'll be impressed by *its refinement and sheer* muscle. Driving the new Laredo around a purpose-built off-*road circuit in* Scotland revealed why the Jeep was chosen as *Off Road and Four-Wheel Drive magazine's* "4x4 of the Year", and also named "Off-Roader of the Year" by *What Car?* and *Auto Express*. Climbing frozen inclines and dropping steep slopes without putting a tyre wrong, articulating huge boulders and logs with impressive poise, and not a single creak or rattle from the interior trim displayed how capable and well-built *these off-roaders are.*

In less than a year, the Grand Cherokee has become a *symbol of success and Jeep* claims an imposing customer profile; between 31 and 55 with one or two children, *he* — 88 per cent of buyers are male — has a degree and is likely to be a company owner or director.

DR DASHBOARD

My prescription is . . .

Q **My wife is fed up. She is *sick of driving* the Land Rover to school and now she wants to go off-road. What do I do?**

A There are strict rules about where you can *drive an off-road vehicle* — unless, of course, you happen to own a few rolling, tumbling *fields and forests. How is your* country seat, by the way?

Q ***Get a grip, doc:* a suburban semi with a postage stamp garden. Isn't there somewhere *she could go to* get this off her chest?**

A *As* it happens, you've struck lucky. Next week *CAR 97 announces* the chance for readers to take their vehicles off-road on one of the best, *specially-designed courses* anywhere. There will be the chance to win free places driving and *riding* in Land Rover Defenders and Discoverys which will be the demonstration vehicles. So order *your copy or make sure you* are at the paper shop in plenty of time.

Q **Aw, I never win those things. Come on doc, there must be another way. She is giving me so much grief.**

A Don't be down-hearted. We will *have lots of* places to win. Even if you *don't, the course* will be *open* to ordinary members of the public who want to try their hand at driving off-road in their own vehicles.

Q **And next thing, she turns up with my nice *Land Rover Discovery* minus several body panels. Are you absolutely sure about this off-road *stuff*?**

A Great news. There will be experts to ensure she gets round safely *and* doesn't dig your precious pride and joy in too deep into a field of goo. Anyway, why wait anxiously at home to discover whether your Discovery is bent or not? Get yourself there for a fantastic day's activity and do some driving as well.

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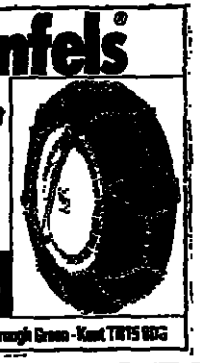

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‘The issue is not a problem of car ownership, but the deficiency of efficient alternatives’

By **Andrew Smith**, Shadow Secretary of State for Transport

Andrew Smith's reply to last week's government claims: "They have neglected public transport"

According to CBI estimates, congestion costs business and the economy about £19 billion a year — that's £800 a household. It is not only the financial costs of congestion, but also the frustration of time wasted and opportunities foregone, as you *sit trapped* by tailback after tailback, day after day, that makes this mounting *congestion all the more* intolerable.

Seventeen years of Tory government have left Britain's transport system in chaos and disrepair. Roads have been left to crumble to crisis point, while the Government chops and changes the roads programme, promising improvements *and then* cutting them back. Motorists are left to suffer delay after delay, *never* knowing when the next emergency roadworks or diversion will pop up.

The facts are clear — if traffic growth continues on current trends, within eight years we face near-gridlocked roads into our major cities for most of the day, most days of the year. Labour is determined to tackle this spiralling congestion, making better use of all forms of transport.

Labour will open real choice in transport. It should not always be a case of *going by car or not going* at all. Rather, the public transport alternatives should be accessible, reliable and convenient for journeys appropriate to them. More of the car journeys we make should be pleasant and efficient, with less time stuck in the jams that so many of us suffer so often.

The issue of traffic growth is not a problem of car ownership, but *rather of excessive dependency* on car use and the deficiency of alternatives — *a great deal of it* down to Government neglect of rail, bus and the public transport infrastructure. The solution must be to extend real choice as to when to use the car and when not to. In a number of other European countries, the level of car ownership is higher than in Britain, but the level *of car use is lower.*

Most people stuck in traffic jams are *not sitting there immobile*, polluting and wasting their petrol out of choice, but because they do not have, or are not aware of, sufficiently attractive or convenient alternatives — and because it's not easy or secure enough to switch from car to rail or bus when you need to. Tory failure to set in place a coherent, integrated transport system with facilities for such interchanges has contributed to the chaos we all face.

To tackle mounting congestion, we have to encourage the provision of those alternatives, as well as *managing our existing road space* better. Where high traffic volumes are unavoidable, we must utilise public-private partnership to the full to deploy advanced management and information systems to make the best use of road capacity.

Labour will work in partnership with the automotive industry, motoring organisations and other interested parties to develop and deploy telematics and on-board information. The potential of this new technology is phenomenal.

Before too long, many cars on the *market will be fitted with the on*-board audio information facility *directing the journey — effectively* your own A-Z and route planner *rolled into one.*

Telematic systems already in place, such as those which keep traffic moving by varying speed limits according to traffic flows, will be more extensively applied as their capability and efficiency improve. In conjunction with up-to-the-minute travel information warning *of accidents or hold-ups ahead*, relayed via roadway displays or direct to the car, journey planning will soon become much more sophisticated and efficient. In turn, fewer of the journeys we make by car should be stressed by unexpected delay, and more of them pleasant and direct.

Indeed, these technologies have the potential to transform motoring *as we know it. Labour is already* examining how government can best work with and harness the energies and innovation of industry in applying these developments to the benefit of Britain's motorists, economy and environment.

I believe that environmental *standards and integrated transport* will be essential to the more flexible *role of the car in the 21st century.* A Labour government would work with the automotive industry, and its incredible innovative, organisational and market-sensitive abilities to help provide solutions. There are big benefits for motorists, the environment — and the motor industry — from further progress on safety, fuel efficiency, emissions, traffic management and every area where we can help to keep the industry at the forefront of global *competition.*

In the whole debate about the car, it is time to move beyond sterile debates about pro and anti. People want the freedom and opportunity the car has brought. At the same time they do not want limitless road-building in a vain quest to accommodate every conceivable car journey. The question then is how to manage the car and secure *the best mix of car-borne mobility* and other ways of travelling. Labour is determined to forge ahead on this in partnership with industry, and, in line with our broader transport strategy, to get Britain moving into the 21st century.

DAVID TAYLOR: THE GREEN PARTY

Turning off the road to gridlock UK

Most people are unaware of the significance of the *Road Traffic Reduction* Bill, which had its Second Reading in the House of Commons on Friday, January 24, and passed with all-party support.

It is now government policy to reduce traffic. This astonishing about-turn was agreed the day before Sir George Young's article appeared in last week's *Car 97*. It made his arguments appear more dated than they already were.

The Road Traffic Reduction Bill is considerably weaker than the original version drafted by the Green Party, *Friends of the* Earth and Plaid Cymru. It is no longer *adequate for the scale of the* problem. It obliges councils to draw up local traffic reduction plans, to be sent to the Secretary of State for Transport for approval. Regional targets provide a framework for coordination, but the original Bill also included provision for national targets and for a national plan.

Traffic could be cut by 10 per cent by 2010

These omissions leave the Government *in a ridiculous* position, supporting traffic reduction *at a local level while its* national policies promote increased *traffic! The Government's own* statistics predict widespread gridlock within nine years.

The Green Party is calling for a national strategy for reducing traffic, based on clearly identified targets. Traffic could and should be cut by 5 per cent (from 1990 levels) by 2005 and 10 per cent by 2010.

Government policies such as road building, subsidised car manufacture, *rundown public* transport, cheap fuel and out-of-town *development* all encourage additional traffic and need urgent *action.*

We also now have "hire purchase" roads, DBFOs (Design Build Finance and Operate). The *more* the roads are used, the more the consortiums get paid. They are *already* lobbying for "their" road to be routed past future development sites. A central demand of the tunnelling protesters at Fairmile, which we strongly support, is that the details of these deals should be made public.

Labour also supports private *investment* in transport infrastructure, even though DBFOs are more *expensive.* Is this because the deferred expenditure will reduce *the bud*get deficit and help Britain qualify for a single currency?

Sadly, there is little sign that Andrew Smith is any more enlightened *than* Sir George. The Shadow Transport Secretary lives close by the *Cowley* Rover works — a major employer in his constituency.

What should an incoming government do? The Green Party says:

- ● *Restructure* the Department of Transport, more aptly named the "*Department for Roads*". Nothing less than a complete shift in DoT culture *is re*quired. A Traffic Reduction Unit would be responsible for policy formulation and monitor*ing national and local traffic reduc*tion plans.
- ● Establish a National Public Transport Agency to ensure that the new policies were implemented. It would channel funds to public transport and be responsible for franchising and rail regulation.
- ● Improve the connections between different modes of transport. One suggested mechanism is the establishment of integrated public transport franchises and the re-regulation of buses.
- ● Provide funding for transport improvements. There is considerable slack in Sir George's £6 billion *road-building programme. In de*ciding which roads to build, the DoT claims to use criteria based on a road's environmental impact, its ability to relieve congestion and its importance in stimulating economic activity. Yet some schemes retained in the revised roads programme received a lower priority ranking than others that have been dropped. *This would suggest* a *state of* confusion and scope for further *cuts.*

Studies have shown that invest*ment* in public transport creates more jobs than investment in road-building. This is the way to remove bottlenecks without destroying any more of the countryside.

- ● End the subsidies given to car manufacturers. Nissan has to date received some £125m and BMW more than £15m for its new engine plant. Now the Government is considering caving in to Ford's *strong-arm tactics at Halewood.*
- ● Increase fuel tax over and above the current 5 per cent per annum commitment. This is needed to reflect the full health and environment costs of cars and HGVs.
- ● Introduce many of the new schemes that flow naturally from a traffic reduction policy. We need "safe routes to school", patrolled by lollipop women and men, so that parents can leave their cars in the garage and children can walk to school.

What about incentives for teleworking, a tax on company car parking space, a lorry mileage tax, a car purchase tax graded according to recyclability and engine efficiency and tax breaks for green commuting, bus and rail season tickets?

Most of these ideas have been tried and tested by local authorities in Britain or in countries across Europe. We face a transport crisis. Without urgent measures, much of our road system is destined for gridlock. The "grey" policy of accommodating traffic growth through road-building has clearly failed, and at a terrible cost.

It's time Sir George Young and Andrew Smith climbed out of their Rovers and on to their *Raleighs* more often.

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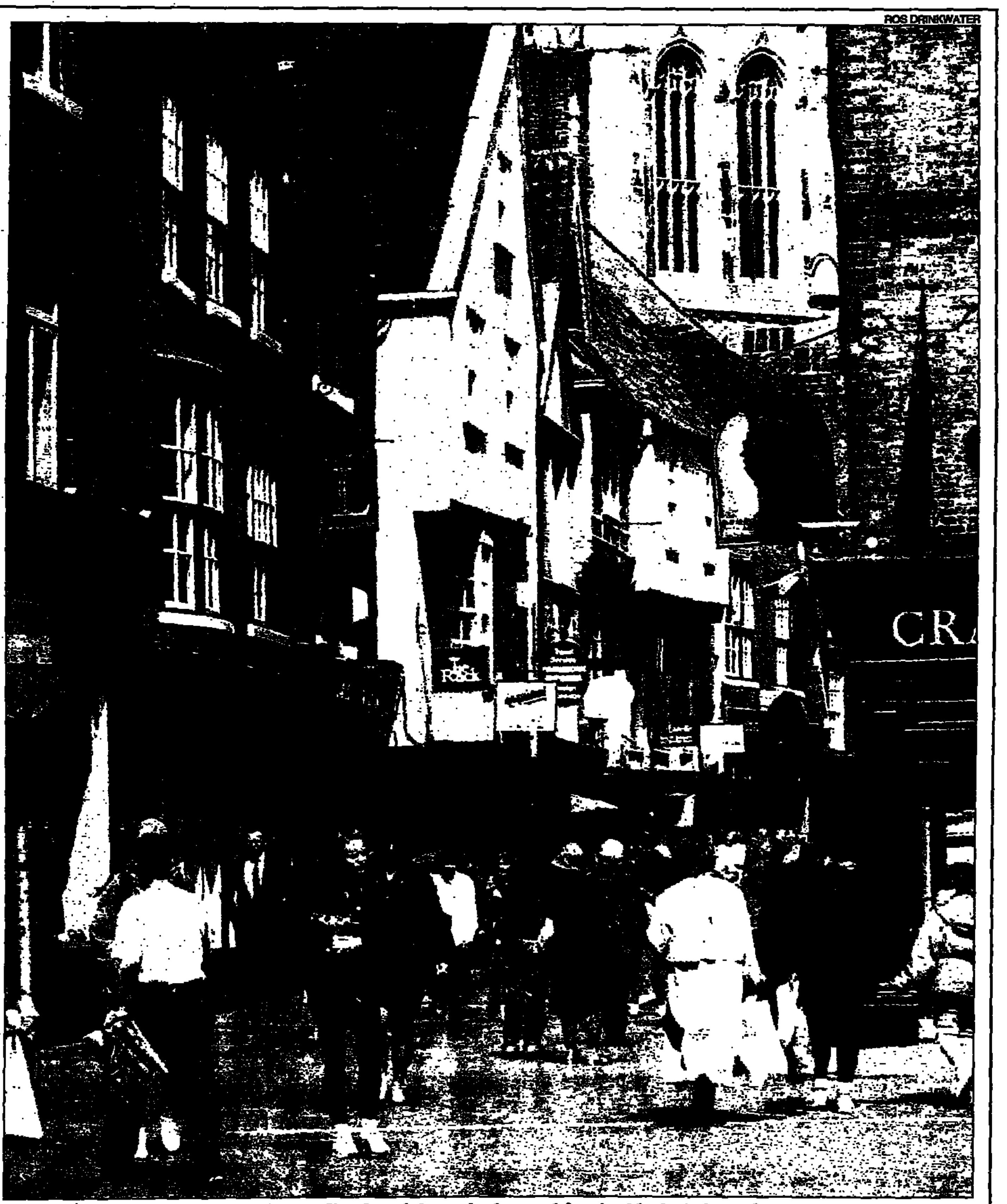

Feet first: the walled medieval heart of York and the main thoroughfare beside the Minster have been pedestrianised

York City scores against drivers

Jonathan Prynn looks at an historic rearguard action to fight pollution

Historic York has been waging an *unceasing* war against the tide of traffic *for the past ten years. Some* of its methods could be adopted *across Britain.*

The council has pre-empted the *Reduction of Traffic Bill by* setting a target of holding the *number of cars entering the city* at 1992 levels. That requires about *5,000 drivers a day to leave their* cars at home and come in by bike, *public transport or on foot.*

The walled medieval heart of York is *already pedestrian-only* between 10am and 4pm and *Deansgate, the main thorough*fare running beside York Min*ster, has been closed to traffic* since the late 1980s. One result *has been a radical reduction* in accidents. "Accident levels are *down to about 40 per cent of the* mid-1980s level in the old city," *says John Rigby, the council's* Director of Environment and Development Services.

There are plans to create a 75-mile pedestrian network linking *the city centre, resident*ial areas, local shops and schools, local *amenities such as leisure centres* and the surrounding countryside. *About a fifth of all residential* streets in York are already traffic *calmed, one of the highest levels* in the country, and three park-*and-ride sites using low emission* buses have been set up.

The council was *reorganised* last April to embrace a greater *area than just the old city.* Before the change, the council considered *radical proposals* to charge drivers £1 a day to enter the city at peak hours, raising an estimated £2.7 million a year, to be invested in further transport improvement. This idea was dropped, however, partly because it was *deemed it would discriminate too* much against the poor and because *there were fears that out*-of-town shoppers could switch *their allegience to Leeds or* Hull.

The council plans to have 50 miles of cycleways, of which half has been built so far, already *giving York one of the highest* levels of cycle usage in Britain. At *23 per cent of journeys, compared* with less than 2 per cent in the *country as a whole,* the city is *regarded as a model for others.*

The council carries out daily monitoring of emissions and informs the local radio station as soon as levels of toxic chemicals reach harmful levels so that warnings can be broadcast.

However, assessment of whether the policies have been successful have been complicated by the presence near the city of three *large power stations. These emit* large quantities of fumes that can *pollute the city's atmosphere* in certain wind conditions.

York, like *other* councils in Britain, still has few powers to *take action to control traffic to* prevent pollution building to *dangerous levels.* Only one council, Leicestershire, already takes action in advance to control traffic if levels of pollution are *forecast to be dangerously high.*

Most urban councils now moniter roadside emissions, but police have been reluctant to spare the resources to enforce emmisions standards because of underfunding, and there have been few prosecutions.

Environmental groups said that many local authorities were still refusing to take controlling traffic seriously with Manchester, Lancaster, and the Merseyside suburbs of Sefton and Corby the worst offenders.

TREES CLEAN UP

Driving force to plant a new forest

■ *MOTORISTS* worried over the levels of pollution spilling from *tailpipes can now assuage their* guilt under a novel tree-planting *scheme* launched *yesterday, writes Nick Nuttall.*

The *project,* Future Forests, claims drivers can, by planting 10 trees a year at a cost of £30, offset their carbon emissions and thus reduce the threat of global warming.

The idea mirrors those mooted by countries like the United States at UN summits on global warming. Washington has proposed on several occasions that America *could offset its greenhouse gas* emissions by massive tree-planting *schemes in the developing world.*

■ The scheme for the British *motorist was launched* at tree-planting ceremony at Thames *Chase, the new community forest* of east London being developed around Upminster, *near* the M25.

Motoring organisations are praising the scheme. An RAC spokesman says: "The science is sound. We would encourage members to participate".

Daniel Morrell of Future Forests, a group of marketing specialists, conservationists and the noted criminal barrister *Gilbert* Gray, said: "We are not suggesting we *have the grand solution to the* problem of global warming. But if *the British public decide they* want to tackle the nation's carbon emissions from cars then we have a mechanism for making it happen."

The first 100 trees were planted by Rodney Bickerstaffe, general secretary of Unison, and funded by donations from union members.

■ MORRELL says they are in discussions with other community projects, the Woodlands Trust, officials at the National Forest — taking shape in the Midlands — *and landowners, including the* National Trust. He says they *already* have 500,000 tree *sites* agreed nationally with a promise of a further 500,000 soon.

Half the weight of a mature, four-ton oak, which is growing and soaking up carbon from the air for between 150 and 200 years, will be carbon. An average motor car emits four times its own weight of carbon dioxide and other pollutants into the air a year.

"So by planting 10 trees a year, every year you drive, you are sequestering your pollution," says Morrell.

■ THERE are around 24 million cars in Britain, so the scale of plantings to offset their emissions would be large, running annually at about 100,000 hectares or the equivalent of 125 large *farms.*

But England's tree cover is just 3 per cent of its *surface.* Robert Mathews, a scientist at the Forestry Commission's Alice Holt research station in Farnham, says: "There is plenty of scope for expanding the area of forests in Britain."

The cost of the trees, which Future Forests insist will come from native rather than imported acorns and seed, is £3. In return the motorist gets a certificate and the funds cover growing costs.

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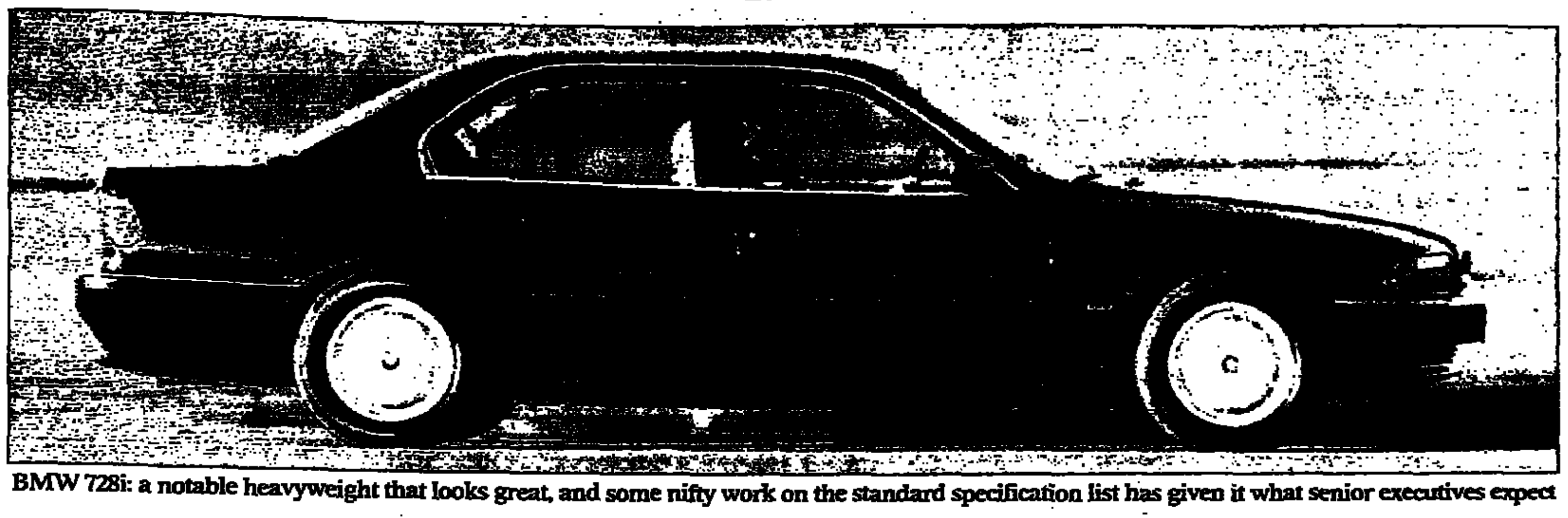
CARMART: YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S NEW, AND WHAT'S USED, ON THE FORECOURTS

Impressive company to be seen in


BMW 728i: a notable heavyweight that looks great, and some nifty work on the standard specification list has given it what senior executives expect

Changes to tax laws have altered the position of the company car as a perk, but sales remain high, *writes Stuart Birch*.

"It remains a very good thing to have," says Curtis Hutchinson, editor of *Company Car*. "In the executive sector of the market, the ratio of company car versus private sales is particularly high, partly because an up-market car is traditionally part of a senior manager's or director's remuneration package but also because executive cars cost a lot of money. Over 90 per cent of Jaguar XJ saloon sales are to companies."

ROAD TEST

This area of the market is hard-fought, and BMW has the 728i as a notable heavyweight to contest it. In upper-level terms, it is what BMW regards as a value-for-money car; it looks great, and some nifty work on the standard specification list (leather seats, auto plus semi-manual gearbox and air-conditioning) has given it what senior executives expect. BMW GB's car product manager, Simon Crewe, says that although the list price of the arch-rival Jaguar XJ6 3.2 in its cheapest form is some £5,000 less than the BMW's £36,300, by the time that is given all the goodies the 728i has as standard, the Jaguar costs £800 more.

However, car sales people are adept at such arithmetic, and Jaguar counters by saying the £34,650 XJ6 3.2 Executive has just about everything anyone might need.

But the big BMW is impressive and business buyers are agreeing: at least half sold go to companies. It may give away 400cc in engine capacity to the Jaguar, but nips along quickly enough, even if getting to 62mph in 9.6 seconds is not exactly eye-watering.

The engine, though, is an aural delight; rev it and it growls lustily, cruise and it just shifts into *sotto voce* mode. The car comes with a multi-facet gearbox which means a choice of five speed auto, four-speed sport or five-speed manual-select clutchless Steptronic. Fuel consumption is excellent, with a mid-20s average and more if you're careful.

Handling is reassuring, the ride a typical BMW mix of firmness with comfort. There are some nice touches — such as spring-loaded roof grab handles that are damped so they don't thump back into place — and some not so nice, such as the skinny steering wheel rim.

The 728i is a big, handsome, mature car with a certain gravitas. But wind up the revs, shove the Selectronic into lower ratios and it will be away on its toes with the best.

BMW 728i
Engine: 2.8 litres, 193bhp, rear-wheel drive.
Performance: 0-62mph in 9.6 seconds, top speed 140mph. EC combined fuel consumption 25.4mpg.
Price: £36,300.

A Legacy worth inheriting

FORECOURT

■ THE Subaru name might not be *chic*, but the car is a rally winner, so the Legacy (1989-93) offers tremendous four-wheel-drive grip, huge estates and a devilishly quick turbo version, reports *CAP Black Book*.

Depreciation is higher than average, although motorsport success has raised the marque's profile, helping to keep used values firm. Dealers are relatively scarce, though this is improving slowly. Best buy is the 2-litre turbo estate: an average mileage 1993 L-reg car should cost around £12,000.

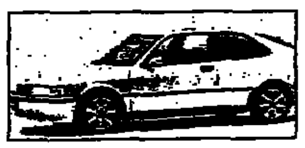
Well built, proof of Legacy's durability comes from its popularity with farmers. But avoid their hard-worked cars, turbos that have been thrashed, clonking four-wheel drive, underbody rust and worn load areas.

■ The Vauxhall Nova (1983-93) is simple, economical, easy to sell and to live with. But the ride is harsh, boot small and trim plasticky. The 1.2 and 1.4-litre cars and five-door models are most sought-after, though the 1.5-litre turbo-diesel is also popular. Pay up to £3,500 for a low-mileage 1990 H-reg three-door.

The SRi and GTE are hard riding and often expensive to buy and insure. Colours such as moss green and china blue destroy values. Beware fuel pump failure, interior water leaks and camshaft noise.

■ ONE way to prove the durability of your cars is to drive them 25,000 miles at more than 140mph to see if anything breaks, *writes Kevin Eason*. Fortunately for Saab, nothing did, and the Swedes are celebrating with a range of special edition 900 models.

The Talledega Challenge was a unique test, with Saab breaking 40 international speed records on the world's fastest raceway at Talledega, Alabama. A 900 2.0 Turbo coupé — one of six cars on the track — drove flat out for the 25,000 miles averaging 140.7mph, equivalent to going around the world in 7½ days.


Talledega: going the distance

All six cars covered 100,000 miles, stopping only for fuel and fresh drivers, with only one problem when a radiator was holed by a flying stone.

The Talledaga celebration range features alloy wheels, special beige and black interior, metallic black, red or silver paints, leather trim and front fog lamps. Prices from £18,350 to £30,950.

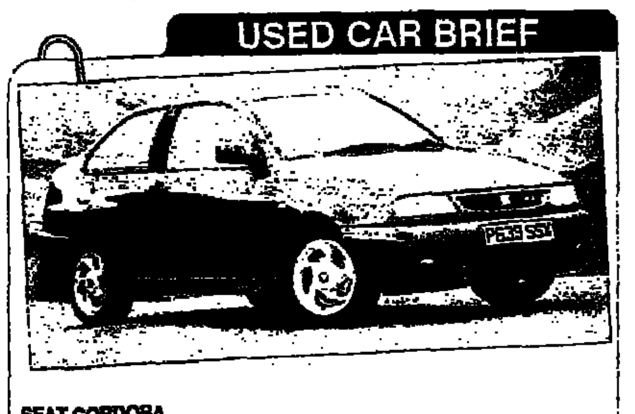
SPARE PARTS

■ MITSUBISHI is reacting to criticism of its bland styling by forming a partnership with Pininfarina to build a new sports utility vehicle (SUV). Due into production in 1999, Pininfarina will build the vehicle, slightly smaller than a Shogun, in Italy to add to Mitsubishi's portfolio of European-manufactured vehicles. Engines, both 1.8 and 2-litre petrol, will be shipped from Japan with Pininfarina expected to turn out about 35,000 vehicles a year to compete with Land Rover's SUV, due for launch next year.

■ SKODA produced a record 263,000 cars last year and is predicting even more with a 30 per cent increase on the cards for 1997 when the new Octavia model joins the Felicia. Britain will not see the Octavia until 1998 — at starting prices around £10,000 — while Skoda supplies its fast-growing markets with left-hand drive vehicles.

■ MINI and Cooper are inseparable. So the face-lifted Mini just announced by Rover gets some Cooper magic to raise engine power and speed. John Cooper Garages in Worthing, West Sussex, announced the new cars — the Cooper S Touring and Cooper S Sport 5 — this week. Only 150 cars, priced between £10,995 and £12,995, will be built, complete with engraved and numbered plaque. The 1.3 A-series engines get 85 brake horse power for maximum speeds of almost 100mph, plus new wheels and paint. The Touring S retains the four-speed gearbox, but the Sport gets a new five-speeder.

USED CAR BRIEF



SEAT CORDOBA
The Cordoba is Seat's saloon version of the Ibiza hatchback super-mini. Since becoming part of the sprawling Volkswagen empire, *Seat cars have been revolutionised with build quality and engines* hugely improved. The Cordoba was launched in 1994 and comes with 1.4, 1.6, 1.8, and 2-litre, four-cylinder petrol engines, as well 1.9-litre, four-cylinder VW diesel and turbo-diesels

GOOD NEWS
The Cordoba is a German in Spanish clothing. Beneath the Seat badge beats the VW heart with engines taken from the VW Polo and Golf, and the car itself is based around the VW Polo. That engineering integrity is proven by Seat's success as world rally champions. Power steering on all models is a nice touch

BAD NEWS
Watch out for *excessively heavy wear* on the front tyres of this front-wheel-drive car, especially on diesel powered models where the front wheels have to handle the diesel engines heavier weight. Shock absorber's suffer wear on high mileage versions, beware guide valve problems and noisy gearboxes

LOOK FOR
Fastback version gives huge amounts *of luggage space*, and 2.0 GT comes with anti-lock braking and traction control in the optional "E" pack. The GLX cars come with electric door *mirrors, electric front* windows and central locking, making them the most popular, though less well-equipped models might be had for less

AVOID
The more powerful Cordobas can trace *their pedigree to the* engines of the sporty VW Golf GTi, but do not expect thrills a minute from this car. Even the 2-litre GT is not as fast as the badging might lead you to hope. The 1.9-litre turbodiesel can be noisy, and 1.4 and 1.6-litre cars offer very modest performance

SAFETY RATING
Every Cordoba above the base CSL trim level comes with a driver-side airbag as standard and the 2-litre GT is available with anti-lock brakes. The VW Polo which is the base for the Cordoba regularly tops safety ratings for cars of its size

INSURANCE
Cover from AA Insurance (0800 444777) on a 1994 1.8-litre Seat Cordoba GLX costs a 55-year-old professional, male or female, living in Winchester with full no claims bonus, £171 a year fully comprehensive. A 22-year-old male, with one-year no claims living in south London pays £863, and a similar female pays £715

REPLACEMENT PARTS
(prices include VAT): Clutch assembly £175; full exhaust £180; catalytic converter £360; front brakepads (pair) £32.50; headlamp £85

PRICES
Expect to pay £6,500 for a 1995 M-reg Cordoba 1.4-litre CLS four-door saloon; £6,000 for a 1994 L-reg 1.6-litre CLX; £7,850 for a 1994 M-reg 1.8-litre GLX; £8,250 for a 1995 N-reg 1.9-litre CDX diesel and £3,750 for a 1994 L-reg 2.0 GT

OVERALL
If you like the stiff and somewhat unyielding drive and ride of German-engineered cars you will like the Cordoba, which also benefits from the Germanic-derived virtues of durable build quality. Essentially a VW with somebody else's badge on, *bringing with it all the strengths of VW, why pay more for the "real"* thing? Especially when most Cordobas should still have time left on the three-year warranty.

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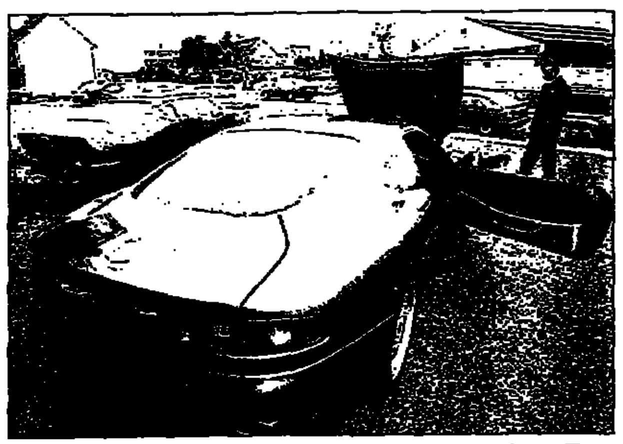
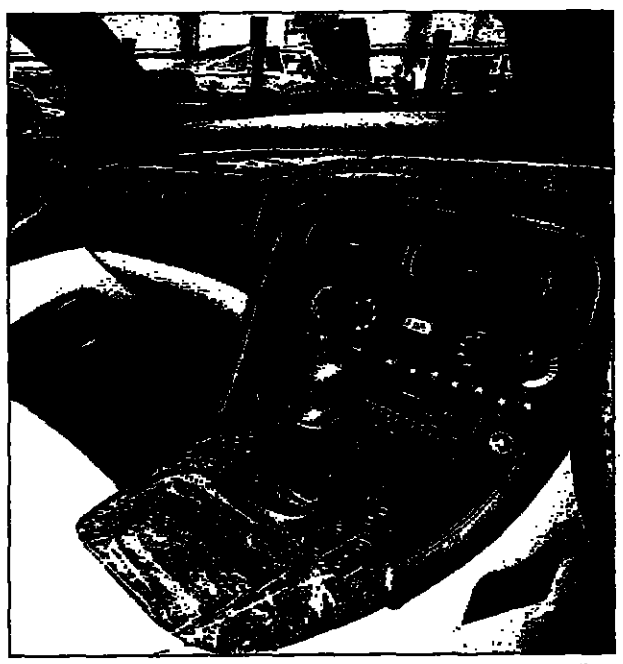
A bit of this and a bit of that . . .

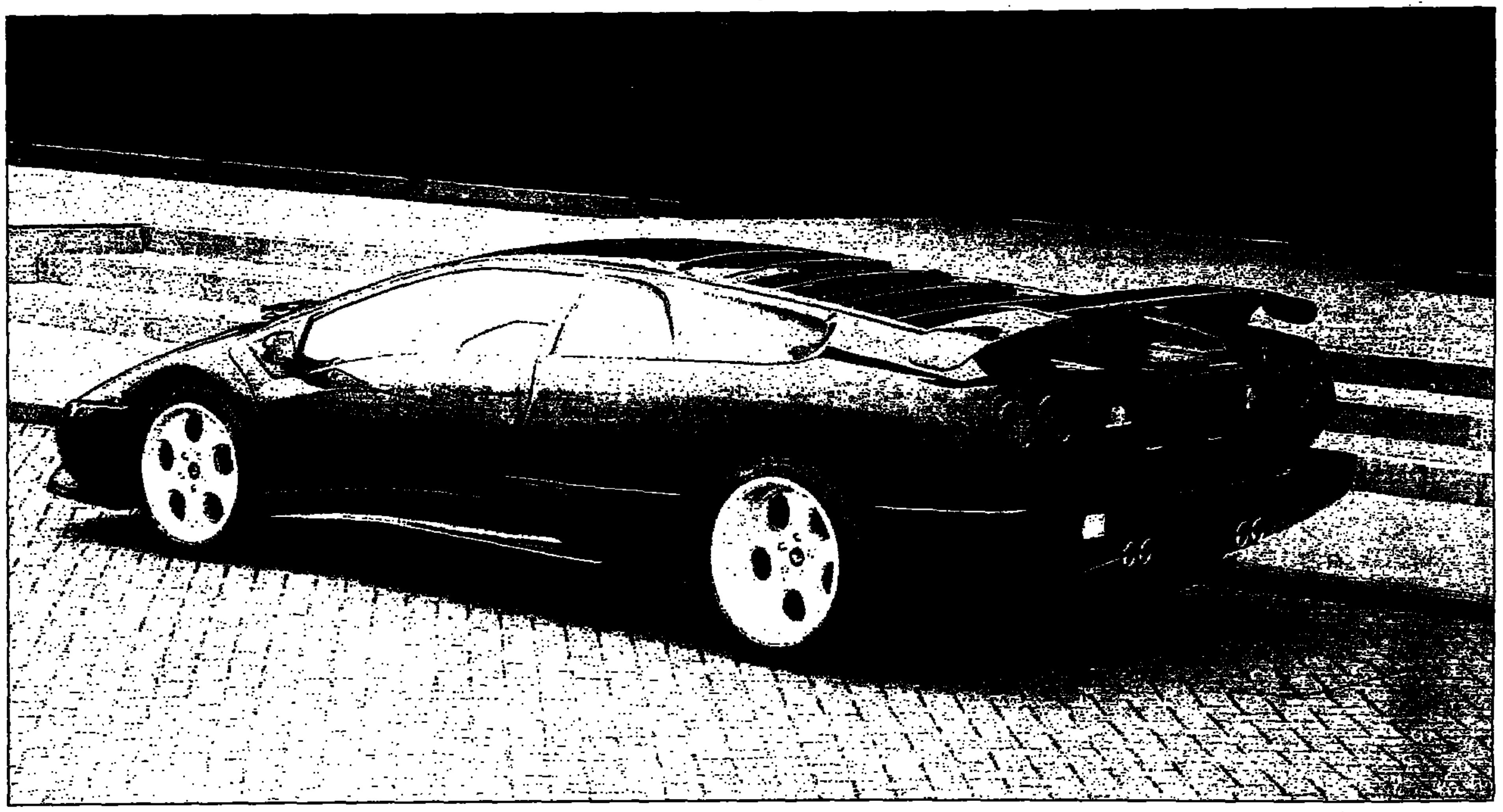
However exclusive your car may be, some of its components have almost certainly been borrowed from much humbler models. **Vaughan Freeman** explains how manufacturers mix and match


Aston Martin's DB7 has rear lights from the Mazda 323F . . .

. . . interior door handles taken from the Mazda MX-5 . . .


. . . and switches usually seen on Jaguars and Fords

The McLaren Fl (£534,500 and 230mph-plus), above, and the Lamborghini Diablo (£150,000 and 200mph) are all charisma, but from behind are literally the back end of a bus



Some say the Lamborghini Diablo and McLaren Fl are *among the most beautiful*, and certainly the most striking-looking, cars on the road. In fact, they literally look like the back end of a bus.

Controversial? No, just blunt fact. The Fl is a hand-built hi-tech missile that costs £534,500 *and tops 230mph*. The Diablo is a snip by comparison at £150,000 and a *slouch at 200mph. But*, despite their purpose-built charisma, both cars use rear lights borrowed from the back of a Bova coach, the sort of machine usually seen trundling along our motorways at 60mph full of yelling schoolchildren.

Motorists might delude themselves that carmakers, *large and small*, design and build from scratch every single piece of their cars. The trend increasingly is to mix and match components from the "parts bins" of other carmakers — a door handle here, a wing mirror there — to *save time and money*.

So if you cannot drum up £60,000 for a Lotus Esprit two-door coupé, you could spend decidedly less for a part of the car by parking an Astra or Vauxhall Carlton on your drive. The Esprit uses switchgear *from the* Astra and door handles from the Carlton.

For a taste of the lifestyle offered by the TVR *Chimaera*, a £30,000 sports car capable of 150mph and more, you could instead invest in a £4,000 second-hand Ford Fiesta, from which the Chimaera uses rear lights. TVR also borrowed the lights of the now defunct Vauxhall Cavalier for its 161mph, £35,000 Griffith, which are used upside down.

Among the most popular borrowed items are the door mirrors from the Citroën CX, a striking design used on cars from Aston Martin, TVR and on the hugely expensive Jaguar XJ220.

Indeed, Aston Martin is one of the big borrowers. One of the cars causing the greatest stir has been Aston's new DB7, *a spectacularly pretty* £82,500 machine capable of close to 160mph. The Aston Martin owner buys the cars because they are different, unique, hand-built one-offs. So why does the DB7 feature rear lights from the Mazda 323F, switches usually seen on Jaguar and Ford cars, and interior door handles from the *Mazda MX-5 sportscar*, which cost around a fifth the price of the DB7?

Former Aston Martin chairman Walter Hayes always enthused about the role that Aston's parent company Ford played in enabling the tiny Newport Pagnell firm to adopt airbag technology from Ford at a fraction of the cost it *would have taken for Aston to* do the job itself. Aston also has access to the Mazda parts bin *through the Japanese firm's* close links with Ford.

Aston Martin executive chairman David Price, who was at Ford for more than 30 years before moving to Aston, believes that companies like his own can draw on the larger scale benefits of bigger companies without compromising the quality or identity of their cars.

"The Ford background has been invaluable and the company would no longer be here without Ford, and that is going to be more the case in future," he says "We have got to stand on our own two feet, but that does not mean we will not be able to get assistance from any new technologies *Ford has developed.*"

One example is the adoption for the DB7 of Ford's EEC5 electronic engine management system: "That is how we can use Ford's corporate technology without in any way destroying the character of the product."

It works both ways. When Ford wanted to try out in-car navigation systems, they were first trialled in Aston Martins. Ford found it more cost-effective to mount the test systems in the bespoke Astons than fit the units to blue oval cars, which would have involved expensive alterations to Ford production lines.

Price says: "There is going to be an increasing exchange of componentry between manufacturers, and the small wholly-owned subsidiaries, the Aston Martins and the Jaguars, are going to be a piece of that, sharing basic Ford development and basic Ford parts.

"But I don't think that has to *influence in any way the* overall character of the car. It is the vehicle engineering that gives the product the character. It doesn't really matter that you are borrowing a transaxle. You can borrow a lot without compromising your traditional marque and heritage."

This is the key. Small, exotic car companies which build only a few hundred vehicles a year simply cannot afford to develop every aspect of their car themselves. Even Rolls-Royce, charging from £100,000 for its cars, uses an engine based around an old American design and various electronic parts from BMW.

Designing and tooling-up to *produce* a set of rear lights might cost a firm such as Lotus £100,000. Manufacturers also have to pay to get type approval for their vehicles as tested by the Vehicle Certification Agency. If another manufacturer has already picked up *that bill for having the component* checked on another car, huge sums can be saved.

The trick is for the smaller manufacturers to adopt the mass produced items in a way that does not compromise their own cars. At the same time, those few customers who do realise that they have seen the switchgear on their £60,000 car on a £7,000 *runabout*, should realise that a volume car part is likely to be just as well designed and built as the rest of their vehicle.

Aston Martin owners don't just want their cars restoring, they want them the way they were. **Ian Morton** reports

The Woodbines that can cost you £100,000

The joke started when the owner of a fraying DB4 *said he wanted such an* absolutely accurate restoration that he could smell the Sixties.

"I want," he told Aston Martin, "to be able to breathe wet duffel coats and damp brogues when I get into the car."

The company rose to the challenge. "You bring the duffel coat and we'll wear the brogues," he was told. He did, everyone enjoyed the moment, and the car was rebuilt using the latest technology but, wherever possible, employing period methods — body panels produced with the original formers, dollies and soft-faced hammers, for instance, and gas-welded *rather than* tig-welded together. And when the owner came to collect his car he found period magazines and a couple of packets of Woodbines *in the cabin* for good measure.

"Getting out the Woodbines," has become a workshop expression at Newport Pagnell. It sums up the determination that an Aston Martin rebuilt there will be as authentic as possible, commensurate with modern engineering and anti-corrosion standards, says service and restoration executive *Kingsley* Riding-Felce.

Nothing less would be appropriate. When a marque has a proud history and fine examples from yesteryear command respect wherever they appear, originality becomes a sacred trust. And with its 75th anniversary due next *year, a record of circuit successes* that included a 1-2 at Le Mans and a recent past that has whirled all the way from the brink of extinction to a triumphant resurgence under the wing of one of the world's great companies, Aston Martin is surely one of those marques.

Servicing and restoring older Astons remains a core activity with a workforce of 81 and an annual turnover of more than £5 million. There are never fewer than 90 cars going through the department, *many belonging to* members of one of motoring's most devout groups, the 5,000-strong Aston Martin Owners' Club, who between them run 8,500 cars.

Servicing and restoration is now being integrated with the manufacturing process, *handling* customers special requirements on new cars so that the "works prepared" label will assure a devotee that anything from a straightforward service or MoT inspec*tion to full race preparation*, individual bodywork on a new model or restoration of a cherished possession has been carried out to an irreproachable standard.

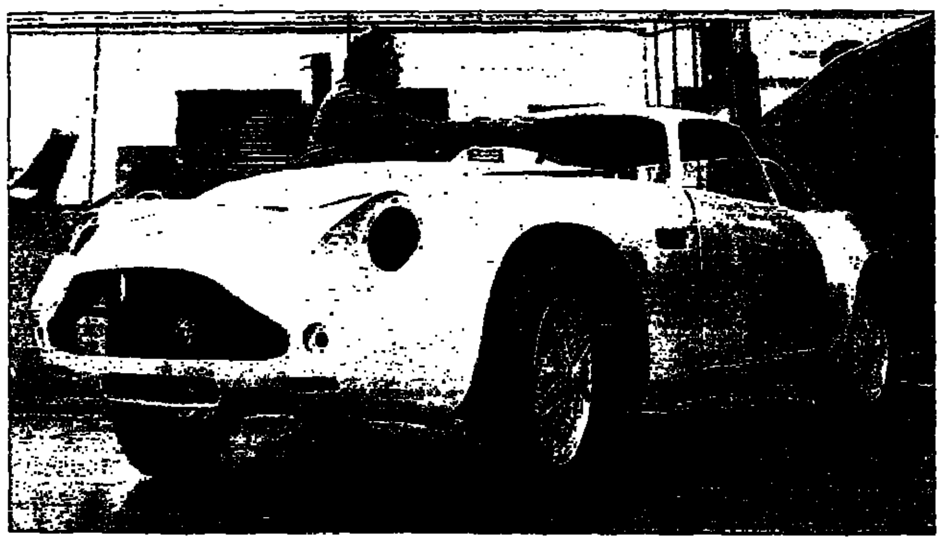
"Projections for the department foresee steady growth *and more than £6 million* turnover by the turn of the decade as more purchasers of new cars opt for the increasing variations which the company is offering," says Riding-Felce. "The more we offer, the more *people* seem to want. Two owners have asked for shooting-brake bodies on V8 coupés, for instance, and we have lots of ideas coming up for special versions.

"But we do say that an Aston Martin is a car for life and *many* customers *want* conversions on the cars they already have — manual to automatic for owners who are getting older, for instance, and from left-hand drive to right for people bringing their cars to *Britain and the other way* round for owners gong to live abroad. We often revitalise cars that have been in the family for years and have become a bit tired — cars belonging to fathers which are passing to sons."

With full restoration a regular requirement, bills for more than £100,000 are routine. The owner of the DB4GT Zagato pictured went to Newport Pagnell to discuss "a bit of refurbishment" and ended up *ordering* an as-original reconstruction that will cost well into three figures, not inordinately high when a Zagato — 19 were made and all survive — is worth *anything* from £500,000 to £1 million-plus according to its competition history.

Meanwhile, tomorrow's classics are being made. In addition to the DB7, Aston *continues to produce its big V8* Virage and Vantage models. Half sell in Britain, the rest scatter among wealthy connoisseurs around the globe. These are built *solely* to order — 77 were finished last year, 42 of them high-performance Vantage models.

"They are an ultimate expression of character and elegance and I defy anyone to say that it is not a delight to drive *one," says executive* chairman David Price.


The DB4GT Zagato: all 19 that were built survive and today can be worth up to £1m

MARTIN'S 1913 HILL START

- ASTON MARTIN *was founded by Lionel Martin*, who built his first special in 1913 after several years selling and racing Singers. The first part of the name came from the *Aston Clinton hill* climb in Buckinghamshire.
- More than 75 per cent of all Aston Martins made are still running. To mark the Diamond Jubilee of the Aston Martin Owners' Club in 1995, one of its older members, Tom May, aged 80, drove 80 miles in 80 minutes in his 1952 DB2.
- The company has had at least ten owners in its history, but its greatest racing successes came between 1947 and 1972 when it was owned by tractor-maker David Brown, who also bought Lagonda in 1947.
- In 1959 an Aston Martin DBR2 won the Le Mans 24-hour endurance race and the company became the first UK maker to win the World Sports Car Constructors' Championship.
- Ford, which paid between £15m and £20m (an exact figure was never disclosed) for Aston Martin in 1987, has since pumped £200m into DB7 development and production.

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Another great British marque has died, but it has a suitably sumptuous memorial, says **Alan Copps**

Closing the book on Lagonda

What is almost certainly the last Lagonda has been bought by a "VIP from Kuwait". Ordered by a dealer but never sold, together with two others it had waited seven years to find a home.

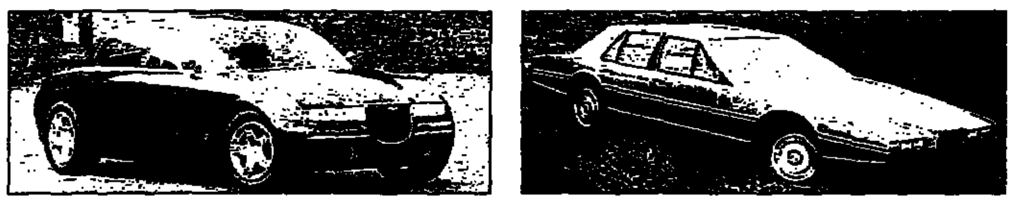
Ironically, it was the announcement that Aston Martin, which owns the Lagonda name, had abandoned plans to build a successor model, the 12-cylinder Vignale, that prompted the sale of the last three cars.

And so another famous British carmaker passes into history, but not without an extraordinarily lavish fanfare. The story of the company and its progress from powered cycles to Le Mans racers and opulent sporting limousines, from ground-breaking manufacturer to the brink of bankruptcy, many times over, is told in comprehensive detail in *Lagonda*, a superbly illustrated book by the German enthusiast Bernd Holthusen. Published as a limited edition by Palawan Press, it costs £275, or for one of just 50 leather-bound copies, £750.

Lagonda chalked up its fair share of "firsts" in car development and design, its racing successes were legion and its reputation for quality and excellence at one time rivalled that of Rolls-Royce or Bentley. It was to Lagonda that W.O. Bentley moved after his own company was taken over by Rolls-Royce, and his last engine design for Lagonda went with the company when it in turn was taken over by David Brown in 1947 and powered Aston Martins to many racing successes.

Bentley arrived in 1935, the year Lagonda scored its greatest victory on the track, a 4.5-litre model winning the Le Mans 24-hour endurance race just two days before the deadline for enforced sale of the company. While there he perfected its most famous model, the LG 45 Rapide and designed the V12 engine which went into the last pre-war Lagondas, the supercars of their era.

Even the Lagonda's advertising was a work of art: from a 1936 brochure for the LG 45



The Vignale concept car, the Lagonda that never was, left, and the last of the legendary line

Lagonda takes its name from the Red Indian name for a settlement beside a river in Ohio, the birthplace in 1859 of Wilbur Gunn who worked in the sewing machine industry, but whose first love was music. Nothing is known for certain of what happened to his wife Bertha, whom he divorced in 1898, or why he came to England. "The assumption persists that Wilbur wanted to perfect his voice as an opera singer in London," says Holthusen.

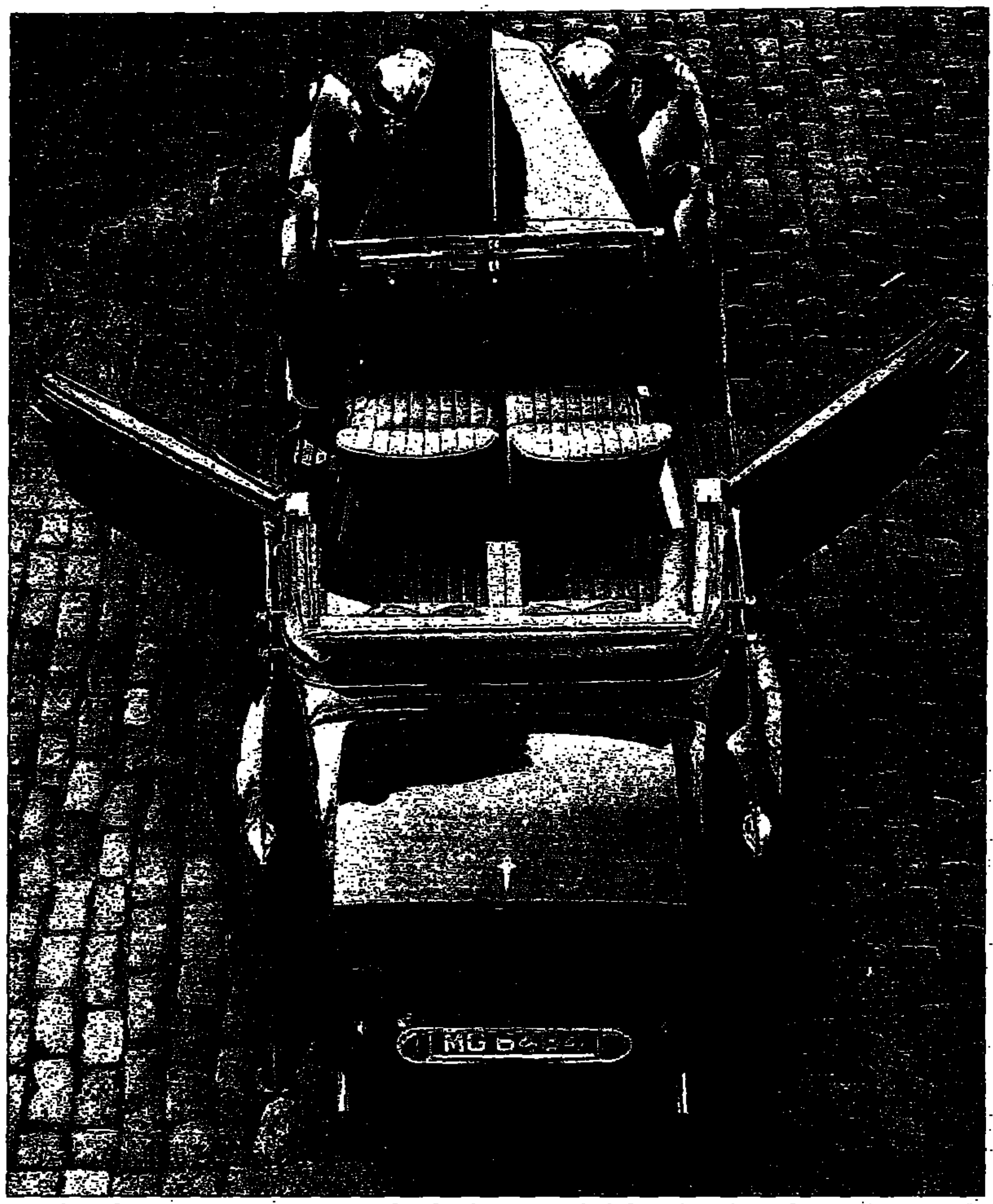
Wilbur Gunn

The automotive world would have been duller if he had succeeded. In the unlikely Thameside setting of Staines, Middlesex, Gunn set up the Lagonda company and designed a tiny engine to fit to his push-bike, moving on to motorcycles and tri-cars. In 1913 the company survived bankruptcy for the second time to produce the most significant innovation of its history. The 11.1hp car was the first anywhere to use an integral body/chassis structure. Not until the mid-1920s did Lancia in Italy emulate this technique, now the norm for cars everywhere.

Gunn died in 1921, but the company's cars continued to boast innovations such as an aluminium dashboard, fail-safe brakes, dipping headlamps, pre-selector gearboxes and in the close-coupled saloon bodywork, fold-down seats which gave it the name the "honeymoon special".

Bankruptcy played another crucial part in the company's history in 1933 when the Invicta car company went bust just as Lagonda was looking for a 4.5-litre engine. It adopted the Meadows engine used by Invicta and exploited it in the Le Mans winning car and the LG 45 Rapide. The immediate pre-war years were a golden age when it produced superb cars, many of which are still on the road.

Despite the Aston Martin takeover, the post-war years were an anti-climax. Now Ford, which owns Aston Martin, has decided that the cost of reviving what is now a largely-forgotten marque is too great and might jeopardise the success of Aston Martin. Aston Martin itself produced 661 cars last year, the second-highest total in its history.



Luxurious, elegant and sporty, this 1939 V12 drop-head coupé was the height of Bentley's achievement at Lagonda

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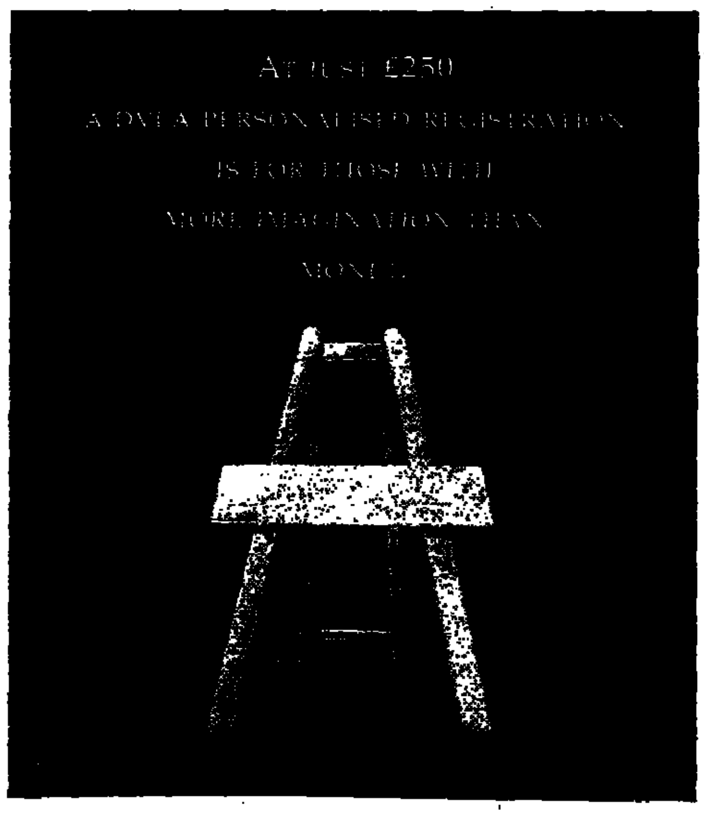

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